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CINE WORLD



JULY 1951

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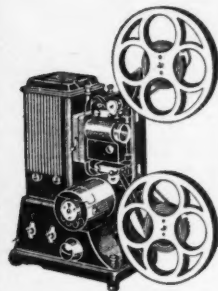
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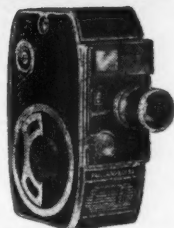
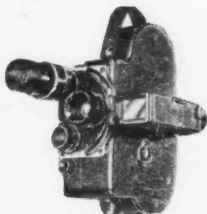
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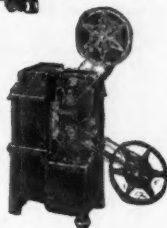
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With 3 Kern lenses **£304 13 9**

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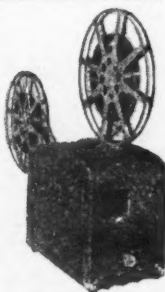
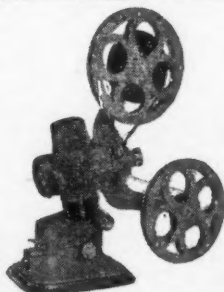
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G.B.-Bell & Howell 621 sound projector.
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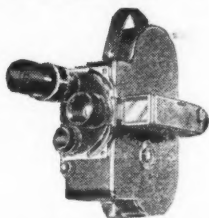
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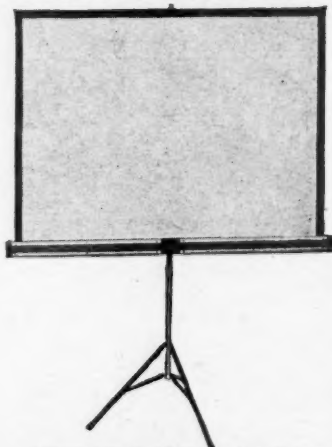
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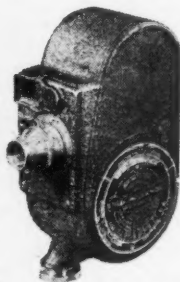
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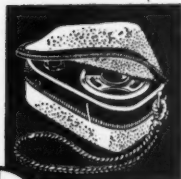
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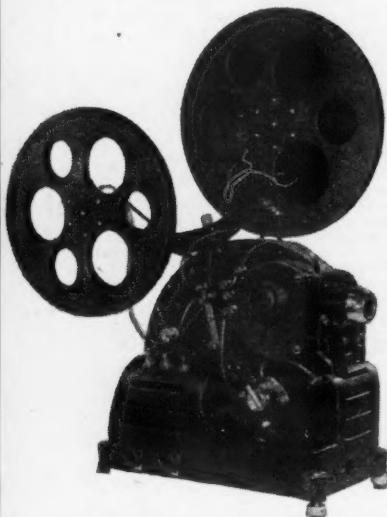
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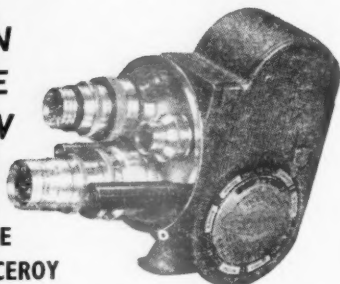
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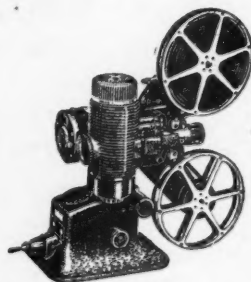
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8mm. Keystone, 300w., case, as new, £28/10
8mm. Specto, 200 watt, shop soiled only, £30
8mm. Kodascope 8/30, 100 watt, £15
8mm. Agfa 'Movector', 200 watt, £23
9.5mm. Pathe 200B, 200 watt, £18/10
9.5mm. Pathe 'Home Movie', special model, £15
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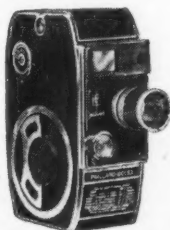
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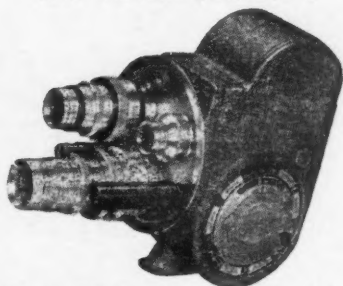
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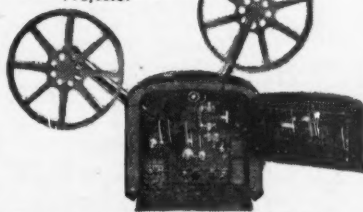
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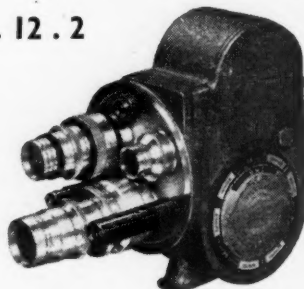
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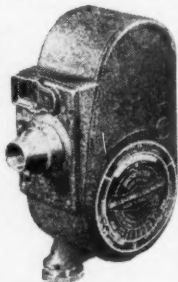
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Amateur CINE WORLD

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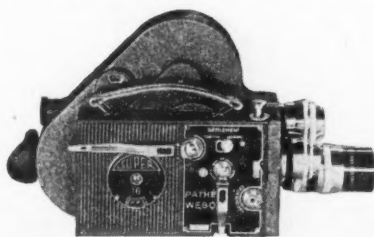
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An A.C.W. Badge is on the Way

In last month's issue we published a letter from a reader, Capt. A. Whitbread, suggesting that readers should be supplied with an A.C.W. badge, and asked you if you would let us know what you thought of the idea. You have indeed let us know. "I'm all for it." "It's what we've been wanting for years." "All members of this unit are fully in support." "Count me in." "Delighted to support the scheme." "Excellent idea." "First-rate." Every letter and card—and there have been a tremendous number—welcomes the proposal wholeheartedly.

Many readers go farther. They suggest, in addition, a car badge, a pennant, a sticker for the windscreen, a tie (with a three stripe motif, of course, in widths 8mm., 9.5mm. and 16mm.) and seals for affixing to the camera case. We appreciate their enthusiasm but we think a badge best serves the purpose, for, after all, the idea is to help fellow enthusiasts get to know each other. Unless a car is parked, with the driver in it, a car badge won't help to facilitate introductions. And on holiday one does not always wear a tie!

Holiday Friends

Talking of holidays, one correspondent writes: "One evening when my fortnight was almost up I was in the hotel lounge reading my favourite book, *A.C.W.*, when a visitor who had been there all the week spotted me and it. We could have kicked ourselves for we found we had the same interesting things to talk about, and now there were only a few days left to us".

Even when one sees someone carrying a camera around or taking a shot, one does not always care to speak. But if he wears a badge

one knows that he will be the pleasant sort of fellow who will welcome an opportunity for a talk and an exchange of views about this fascinating hobby of ours.

Capt. Whitbread (we will ask him to accept the first badge) suggests that the design should be based on that used on the cover of our May, 1949, issue: the globe, with "A.C.W." across it, enclosed by laurel leaves. The majority of our correspondents endorse this, but a number have suggested that we should hold a competition for the best design. We, too, think the cover motif would look effective but we will gladly consider others. So we invite you to send us your suggestions. There will be a prize of £5 for the one we consider best; and should we decide that the cover design leads the field, the prize will go to the runner-up.

Simple Design

The design should be simple, bold (so that the badge is readily noticed) but discreet. The wearer does not want to blazon to the world his interest in cine but at the same time he does not want to have to peer at a stranger's coat—or dress! (We were delighted to find that a number of ladies have signified their intention of wearing the A.C.W. badge—as a brooch).

It will almost certainly be some months before the badge is ready for you. We would like it to be available before the end of the holiday season, so we can allow only a short time for submission of designs. Please send them to us not later than July 2nd.

Although not one correspondent has suggested it, we think it proper that A.C.W. badge wearers should be offered some small privileges.

('Badge wearers'? That's an awkward term. Maybe you can suggest something else? 'A.C.W. Club member,' perhaps? As we pointed out last month, a badge



Distinguished gathering at the Slough F.S. presentation of the 1949 Ten Best. L to R: Frank Taylor, ex-Chairman of the Society, T. Kent, Chairman, Leslie Wood (who introduced the films), Adrian Brunel, President, Alderman Tozer, Mayor of Windsor, and John Snagge (who was Chairman for the evening).

is usually regarded as a club emblem, and a club provides services that a magazine does not normally offer. Many readers, however, have been good enough to say that they don't regard *A.C.W.* as just a magazine.)

But we are getting away from the point. The small privileges we have in mind include the offer of reprints of selected articles containing technical data you might like to keep. They will be printed on gummed paper so that you can paste them into your own cine notebook. As a start, we are arranging for a reprint of the exposure tables published last month, and we hope to announce further reprints from time to time. They will, of course, be available only to those who have the *A.C.W.* badge. There will be no charge for them. You just send a large stamped addressed envelope to us when the announcements appear.

You may have in mind other small privileges you would like to see extended to our cine fraternity. If so, let us have your ideas—but nothing too ambitious, please, for this is not a club in the accepted sense of the term and there are no subscription fees to pay.

Mention of cine notebooks leads us to our second *A.C.W.* scheme:

The A.C.W. Cine Circles

So many lone workers write to us to ask if we can devise some way for them to get to know each other. For various reasons they do not want to submit to the discipline of a cine society. They prefer to make their own films instead of assisting in club productions, but at the same time they would welcome the opportunities for friendly discussions and exchange of views that a society provides.

We hope that the *A.C.W.* Cine Circles will

help to satisfy that need. This is how the Circles will operate:

The core of each will be a notebook—any kind of exercise book of a reasonable size. This notebook will be circulated to each member of a Circle in turn and he will add his own contribution to it. He may write something about the film on which he is at present engaged and ask for comments on his ideas about it; he may circulate a treatment or script and ask for criticisms; he may discuss problems he has come up against and invite solutions; he may ask fellow members if they can suggest where he can get this or that item of equipment; he may just content himself with a friendly letter about amateur cine work in general.

Exchanging Ideas

But he will also read the earlier contributions to the notebook, comment on them if they call for comment, answer if he can any questions asked and generally take a friendly interest in what his fellow members are doing. Having enjoyed and contributed to the notebook, he will post it to the next member on the rota. It will, in effect, be another "Ideas Exchanged Here" which is such a popular feature of *A.C.W.*, but much more personal and intimate and more detailed.

In order that the Circles shall be really friendly affairs and easily operated, membership of each will be limited to twelve. First we need a leader for each to get them going. His task will be to provide the notebook, set out in the first pages of it the names and addresses of the other eleven members in the order in which they are to receive the book, write his own piece of welcome and whatever news and views he likes, and post it to the first member on the rota.

We suggest that when the notebook is circulated on its first round each member sticks in it a photograph of himself. He may even like to include snaps of members of his family as

AMATEUR CINE WORLD PRICE INCREASE

The two innovations announced in these pages will, we hope, prove popular, but we are very sorry that we have to introduce another which assuredly will not. It is with great regret that we announce that, as from next month, we are compelled to increase the price of *A.C.W.* to one shilling. We have avoided taking this inevitable step as long as we could, but though you will certainly deplore it as much as we do, we are confident you will understand the reasons for it. The Press generally, indeed, has made them only too plain in recent months as magazine after magazine has been forced to advance its price.

The inescapable facts are that the paper we

use, unsatisfactory though it is by pre-war standards, costs to-day nearly five times as much as it did in 1939, and the cost of printing and block-making has soared by 100%. Almost every other charge in connection with the production and distribution of *A.C.W.* has also risen.

We had hoped that we might yet have been able to withstand the economic pressure, but unfortunately its steady increase takes the decision out of our hands. We shall, however, do our best to ensure that at its new price of 1s., *A.C.W.* will nevertheless offer good value for money. Postal subscribers will continue to receive the magazine at the former price until the expiry of their subscriptions.

well, for these Circles are not for the dry-as-dust technician who cares only for technique. In time members may strike up even closer friendships among those whose contributions to the notebook most appeal to them. Possibly, too, when you get to know each other, the loan of films might be arranged. Or you might circulate one of your films with the book and ask for criticisms.

We think the lone worker would prefer to join in with others who use the same gauge as himself, so there will be three main groups of Circles: 8mm., 9.5mm. and 16mm. We do not feel that these groups should be further subdivided into Beginners and Intermediates, for we hope that the more knowledgeable amateur will be willing to give a helping hand to the less experienced where he can. But we think that the really advanced amateur might wish to have a Circle for himself.

If, then, you are willing to act as a leader, will you please send us your name and address at once, specifying the Circle you wish to form. We do not at this stage propose to publish those names and addresses because this might result in the leaders getting far more applications to join than could be accommodated and involve

them in a lot of unproductive correspondence.

Then will all those lone workers who would like to join an *A.C.W.* Cine Circle also write to us *at once*, again specifying gauge and stating whether they are beginner, intermediate or advanced. We will then make up lists of eleven from the applications and forward them to the leader. In compiling these lists we shall try to group together lone workers from the same counties, but in each Circle we also plan to include three or four folk farther afield so that there shall not be an undue emphasis on regional interests. It is good for the man down south to know what the man up north is doing.

It would be of some help to us in sorting out the groups of twelve if you would care to say something about yourself: your degree of experience, the apparatus you use or would like to use, the type of cine subject you most favour, and so on. But, of course, you needn't do so unless you want.

Starting the Ball Rolling

We will advise each member of the Circle to which he has been assigned the name and address of the leader, and it will then be up to the latter to start the ball rolling. We suggest he undertakes the somewhat arduous task of writing a very brief note of welcome to each of the eleven, informing them when they can expect to receive the notebook.

It is up to the leaders to decide the length of time each member shall keep the notebook (and they might modify their decision in consultation with members after the first round). Three days seems reasonable. This, allowing for time taken in the post, means that it will come round to each member once every two months. If you feel that two months is too long to wait, you could start a second notebook to follow one month, say, after the first. When the first one gets back to the leader he sends it out again, to remain in circulation until it is full.

Active Co-operation Required

The success of the *A.C.W.* Cine Circles depends on the active co-operation of *every* member. If your part consists in reading fellow members' contributions but contributing little yourself ("Sorry that I have no time to contribute to the notebook this month", "I've been so busy working on my film that I must give the notebook a miss this time") you may throw the whole thing out of gear. So please don't apply for membership unless you are willing to do your best to make a go of it.

We hope in time to publish reports on the Circles in the pages of *A.C.W.* in the same way as we publish news from the societies; and we hope, too, that eventually the lone worker will command the same amount of space in our columns as the society member. So please let us hear from you right away.



Projector set-up used by the Skegness Photographic and Cine Society when, using back projection, they gave shows as part of the local arts and crafts exhibition. The screen was a piece of frosted, sand-blasted glass 5½ ft. x 4 ft. A photograph of the audience's view of the proceedings appears on page 284. Incidentally, club members may join the *A.C.W.* Cine Circles if they wish. The Circles are designed primarily for the lone worker but need not be limited exclusively to him.

WITH AND WITHOUT A FILTER

By H. A. V. BULLEID, M.A., A.R.P.S.

Filters? Sometimes you *must* use them, sometimes you are best advised to use them, and sometimes you can leave the whole bally lot at home in the drawer. Although I have always loathed the necessity for using them, and in my recent technically flawless (!)—June *A.C.W.* p.127—*Cocktail* I ignored them completely, at least I don't disguise their frequent necessity from myself.

There are three "must" categories:—

(1) Bright subjects on a brilliant day call for $f/22$ with 27° pan film, and $f/32$ with the fastest pan films. Many a lens closes no further than $f/16$. Hence you are forced to employ a grey (neutral density) filter. These generally reduce the light reaching the lens to one quarter, so their factor is $x4$ and you open up the lens two stops, e.g., $f/11$ with the $x4$ filter equals $f/22$ without it.

(2) Distant scenes (particularly with colour film) require a haze filter. This suppresses ultra violet light which otherwise has the effect of slight fogging. In some cases this is "realistic", but generally one prefers the clearest possible picture. The haze filter has a factor of $x1$, i.e., no effect on exposure. On monochrome also one wants to suppress this haze, but any glass filter cuts out the U.V. light, so that the yellow filter one almost always uses in distant scenes covers this duty as well.

(3) To use type A Kodachrome outdoors, you have to use a Wratten 85, the combination having the same speed to daylight as regular Kodachrome with no filter.

These "musts" supply a good reason for recapitulating the general points about filters:



An $x4$ yellow or green filter slightly increases contrast and brings up the clouds. An orange or red filter will darken the sky considerably and so show the clouds in yet greater contrast. In the latter case the effect is forced and rather artificial but has its occasional use for dramatic or pictorial emphasis.

Filters come in three types: gelatin sheet, gelatin cemented between glass, or mass-dyed glass. In that order, they are progressively more expensive. For the occasional special effect, gelatin is the obvious choice, though very careful handling is essential, as if touched by the fingers it will be marked and spoilt.

Cemented filters are probably the best general purpose compromise; in time they tend to break down at the edges, the characteristic appearance of minute red and green rings indicating that air has penetrated. Careful handling reduces the likelihood of such breakdown: for example, cleaning should be done *very lightly*, not with beefy great

sweeps as on a car windscreen. Filters made from glass dyed in the mass then ground as optical flats are the nicest, and are virtually everlasting: but I emphasize that you couldn't distinguish between the results from the three types, assuming correct handling and identical conditions.

The best position for a filter is as near as possible to the lens. This is because the area of filter used is then a minimum, and so losses due to scatter are reduced to a minimum. In using a filter, you are inevitably introducing two more glass/air, or gelatin/air, surfaces: these give the same losses as similar surfaces in the lens, which are nowadays so ostentatiously bloomed! So remember that as soon as a filter is used, some loss occurs, which has to be more than recouped by the property of the filter to make its use worthwhile.

Some cameramen place filters *between* the lens and the gate, but caution! (a) remember it is there, and (b) in particular check that, if you are using a wide-angle lens, the back cell of the lens does not foul it. Incidentally, when so used gelatin filters are ideal. With turret head cameras, there is also the great advantage that one filter covers all three lenses.

If you adopt the most common practice, of buying a filter mount to fit over or screw into the front of the lens, the best type is that which places the filter as near as possible to the front glass of the lens and incorporates a lens hood in front of the filter. But we must state also that very satisfactory results are obtained by the cheap and simple expedient of clipping the filter over the *front* of the existing lens hood, and dispensing with any further hooding.

The makers of filters issue tables giving the filter factors for the various makes and types of films. The factor simply means the number of times the exposure must be increased, e.g., x6 means increase six times, that is, 2½ stops.

If you use two filters at once, the factors are multiplied together. For example, if you use an x4 grey, with an x6 orange, the combined factor would be x24, so you would have to open up 4½ stops. Those who are irked by such calculations may find the table at the foot of this page useful.

Where two filters of the same colour are used together, the makers should state the combined factor, which will probably be more nearly found by adding than multiplying the factors.

It is very important indeed to understand clearly that the filter factor of a colour filter is also affected by the colour of the light falling on the subject. Take the case of a medium yellow general purpose filter, factor x2 with 27° pan film. It holds back blues but lets pass yellows and greens. In a landscape lit by the midday sun in a blue sky, you open up one stop with this filter and find the greens little changed, because there was some blue in the light illuminating them and the loss of this is covered by the filter factor.

On the other hand, the blues in the picture get a decided hold-back, and register darker, hence clouds can be seen and the blue sky will be about the same tone as the fields. But if you shot the same scene in the evening, when the sun's rays are very yellow, and if you opened up one stop the fields would be too light—over-exposed; the factor has decreased to perhaps x1½ simply because the incident light now contains an excessive proportion of light of the same colour as the filter.

Experience, hastened by single-frame tests as opportunities arise, tells you how to make the odd half-stop allowances, almost always necessary when using yellow or yellow-green filters within two or three hours of sunrise or sunset.

Experience also tells you whether in a particular case you should apply the whole factor. Perhaps the most common deviation from using the whole factor is in moonlight scenes shot in full sunlight

Filter Factor	x1	x1½	x2	x3	x4	x6	x8	x12	x16	x24	x32
Open lens this number of stops	0	½	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5

(a cloudless blue sky being almost essential for quality results) using an orange or red filter with pan film. The factor of these filters is generally $x6$ or $x8$, but in practice you do not want the moonlit scene to be fully exposed: you want it to look decidedly dark.

To achieve this, first set the aperture, allowing for the factor, then close down one stop. For example, if the normal exposure is $f/16$, eight times more exposure is required with the $x8$ filter, i.e., three stops, so you must use $f/5.6$; but you want a dark result, so under-expose by one stop and give $f/8$. If the film is to receive automatically compensated processing, increase the under-exposure by a further half stop to defeat the compensating machinery, and give $f/9$.

You need not, but you should, use filters in the following cases, which all assume that monochrome panchromatic film is being used, orthochromatic being a thing of the past, I feel.

(1) *General country scenes.* A green or a yellow filter improves tone rendering, slightly increases contrast, and puts back the clouds in the sky. One can get yellow and green filters of factors ranging from $x1\frac{1}{2}$ to $x6$, and filter maniacs sport a vast range, but all you honestly need are an $x2$ and an $x4$. As to whether yellow or green is used is a matter of personal preference.

The $x2$ is used by some workers for all country scenes, as a sort of standard item of equipment. You switch to the $x4$ when you want a strong cloud pattern, or an even more contrasty effect in perhaps a distant shot with rolling meadows and a range of yellows and greens with a proportion of fleecy sky.

(2) *Seaside scenes.* It is not so often advised in the books, but I always use an $x2$ yellow at the seaside, leaving it clamped permanently across the front of my lens hood. It heightens the sea/sand contrast, which is often inadequate, by making the sand lighter and the sea darker, and it prevents sea spray from getting into the lens.

(3) *Close-ups with super-speed pan film,* unless the subject has been specially made-up. These emulsions are over-sensitive to red, so they reproduce reds



A blue filter, used with super-speed pan, could be appropriately used for the top subject but is unnecessary and indeed undesirable for the second. Its use in close-ups is to accentuate the lips which might otherwise reproduce too pale. Top picture is a frame enlargement from "Farewell to Childhood"; second picture is from "How to Catch a Burglar"—both plaque winners in the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best Competition.

too pale, making girls' lips lack pluck. To remedy this and such allied disasters as auburn hair appearing straw-coloured, use a blue filter, factor generally $x1\frac{1}{2}$. Remember that the factor of a blue filter *increases* by about half a stop when used in the yellowish sunlight of early morning or late afternoon.

(4) *Cloud and storm scenes.* For "luscious" effects, due to over-correction—that is to say, whereas the monochrome rendering of a blue sky by panchromatic films is a little too pale, over-correction renders it too dark—use an orange or a red filter. These prevent any action on the emulsion by blue light, which they totally absorb. The result is that a shot of white clouds in a deep blue sky will, if shot with the red filter, retain the dazzling white of the clouds but render the blue as almost black.

The professionals did this to death in the early 1930's, but are at present mercifully resting it. It is most effective when there is some dramatic reason for it, as in the approach of thunder clouds. Another good set-up is to shoot directly at the sun, while it is behind a white cloud. For ordinary daytime effects, give the full filter factor, generally x6 or x8. The factor of a red filter is always less with the fastest pan films than with normal pan. It is also less in the morning and evening sun than around midday.

So you see, if you are shooting the family in the garden, mainly in close and medium shots, or if you are doing a hack comedy, don't bother with filters, but for that extra bit of quality here and there, you've simply got to have a go.

Expensive, but very well worth its place in the filter box, is the polar screen. This excludes light which, having been reflected from something, has its waves in planes apart from the plane of the main incident light. The polar filter is fitted to the front of the lens just like any other filter, but is attached to a smaller viewing polar screen, so that you know when it is in the correct rotatory position. It can be used with colour as well as monochrome film, and its factor is generally x2.

Typical examples of reflected light which the polar filter can eliminate occur in shots into windows, polished furniture, water surfaces, blue sky. In use, you sight the subject through the filter, rotate it till the desired effect is noted, fit to lens, verify that it is correct with the viewing screen, and shoot. You can, by rotating the filter while shooting, darken the sky behind a vivid flower, or gradually bring up the shine on a street scene after rain—to give two random examples.

One last word. Filters are really blood-brothers to all the bits of material one fixes in front of the camera lens to modify the effect on the film. It is therefore a good thing, when you decide to buy a new filter-holder, preferably containing its own lens-hood, to check that it is properly and conveniently assembled so that it can be used also for holding bits of gauze, or diffusion discs, or oddments of glass for distorting shots, when the need arises. Aim at collecting together multi-purpose apparatus; the more use it has the better, for these accessories hardly ever wear out. All they need is care and some respect. The less bits you have and the more you use them, the better will they be looked after.

A.C.W. Intermediate Competition

If you have been a reader of *A.C.W.* for some time, you will know about this already, for you may be one of those 'average' workers in response to whose request we have arranged our Intermediate Competition. For the newcomer may we add that Intermediate is for amateurs who do not normally enter for the national contests, have no connection in any way with professional films and have not won an award or commendation in any of the big competitions.

There are two classes: for films taken with a fixed focus f/3.5 camera, and for films taken with any other sort of camera. Any length, any gauge, any subject. There will be an award of £5 for the best five films in each class.

We do not look for highly polished work, but we hope to find promise. We want to see *films*, however unpretentious, as distinct from a haphazard, unplanned, unedited

series of shots; and, of course, they must have a main title.

Ten Best entries are expected to reach an adequate standard technically, but Intermediate is primarily designed as a spur to craftsmanship, inviting you to take a little more trouble than you normally would with your hobby.

Entry forms will be available in due course, and each entrant will be provided with a copy of the judging sheet from which he will be able to see how he fared in various aspects of technique: camerawork, continuity, editing, exposure, lighting, titling and so on.

Who knows? Inter entrants—the folk who are doubtful about competing against the experienced worker in the Ten Best—might well show the practised hand a thing or two. And at the very least entry in it will help you to gauge your progress.

Closing date: Sept. 15th.



A lunch date with Chester Morris gives the author an opportunity of discussing the actor's art with a star practitioner.

By
DOUGLAS
GOODLAD

YOU MUST THINK THE PART

It is highly likely that the picture in which you are to appear will be silent, and last month I warned that the acting in many old silent films was too exaggerated in style to be helpful as a model. Is the modern professional film of any use as a guide to the amateur actor in a silent film? Speech allows the film actor to exploit facets of personality which are lost in a silent picture. Without speech to assist characterisation, you will build your portrayal mainly by conveying emotions. Obviously enough, with the emphasis on emotions, you must be sure that the amount of feeling you put into your performance is adequate.

How, then, can the sound film help? I think it can be useful because most recruits to film acting are almost certain to overact at first. They may very well have less trouble in this direction if their acting is modelled on the understatement of sound films. The right amount of extra effort—necessary for *silent* films because the performance is purely visual—will probably present itself automatically because the beginner's imitation of *sound* film technique is likely to be overdone.

But here let me give a warning—and this applies even if you are to appear in a sound film. Some players today take understatement too far, and adapt a style which is anaemic—and even static. Such is the degree of immobility achieved by James Mason in *Pandora* and *The Flying Dutchman*, for instance, that certain shots of him are like frames from a film strip. And other actors are so afraid of overdoing even a straightforward characterisation (or they are perversely determined to stylise a naturalistic art) that they hardly dare breathe when on the set. They are obviously not useful models.

When I saw a picture in a recent issue of a popular magazine of the Masons' child doing her party piece—"her expressions"—with fond parents as audience, I thought it a pity that papa had not given us more expressions in *Pandora*. But the caption explaining that the child would register joy, hunger, horror, etc., to order also reminded me of a series of photographs which used to appear in a well known fan magazine. Each week a strip of photographs was given of a famous actor or actress, showing the player in various moods: angry,

apprehensive, frightened, joyful, anguished and so on. Some people still mistakenly suppose that film acting is like this—that the actor has a stock of facial expressions, and wears them, in turn, to suit the situation. You can easily prove how useless such mechanically simulated emotions are by giving yourself an imaginary film test in front of a mirror.

This approach to film acting is quite wrong. If the Masons are hoping that Portland will be a film actress, that expressions routine is the wrong way to bring her up! Emotions must be felt, not contrived.

"It isn't how you look, it's what you're thinking that matters."

There you have the key to the whole secret of film acting. The advice I have quoted came from the late Leslie Howard, and it endorses what has been said recently in *A.C.W.* by Tony Rose and George Sewell.

Rosamund John told me that Howard's advice was given to her when she played opposite him in *First Of The Few*. Howard, whose mastery of film technique is not likely to be outmatched, explained why it is so vitally important to *think the part*. Emotions can be unmistakably conveyed by a film actor who is thinking them, and just as the right thoughts will come across, extraneous thoughts will register, too. Howard pointed out that if Miss John were worrying about her hair, or about toeing the piece of wood nailed on the floor to mark the spot where she would be in focus, that anxiety would show. "You must think your part and nothing else," Miss John said. "Mechanical" emotions just won't do. The thinking does the trick. And the "eyes" have it. "They're the mirror of the soul," Miss John reminded me. "What's inside will show in them."

If, as I have suggested, you will analyse the performances of professional actors you will find that their eyes do a great deal of the work. This is to be expected when a portrayal is achieved by thinking it. And the right amount of facial expression will follow naturally as the result of thinking in the correct mood. If the director complains that

you are underplaying, the remedy is to think harder!

It is obvious that the technique of film acting must be acquired, and then forgotten. If a player is thinking about technique, that will show just as much as anxiety over a hair-do; she may give a good performance, but that is all it will be, a *performance*, rather than a *portrayal*. Only by absorbing technique and using it without thinking about it can you acquire that great asset of the screen actor—*relaxation*. "I have never met a film actor who had a greater gift for relaxation than Leslie Howard. It was his trump card," Rosamund John declared.

But so many things on a film set make it difficult for an actor to relax. In the following amusing quotation from "Footnotes To The Film" Robert Donat describes some of these difficulties and confirms what has been said above about the avoidance of extraneous thoughts and the importance of employing technique without thinking about it:

"On the screen, suppose we see a modern young man dangling a leg over a modern office desk with modern New York receding in the background. Suddenly we come closer to him. In other words, the camera moves into close-up.

"His eyes flash a look of doubt and that is all . . . That flicker of doubt is created in a blaze of light in a dreadful fug under the very nose of that terrifying taskmaster, the camera lens, with a 'mike' on a boom hovering overhead, surrounded by the gang of electricians and props boys and faced by the unit staff headed by the director—who is expecting results.

"In actual fact, the young man's behind is probably propped up on a couple of cushions or books, and the desk raised up on wood blocks to improve matters for the camera, so that his leg dangles at a very unnatural height from the ground, and he must gauge his movements so that at the moment of the close-up his head will be momentarily still and his eyes—almost imperceptibly—will flash their story; not into the lens itself (*for the lens, though our most inquisitive neighbour, must be ignored completely if we would win it over completely*), not precisely into the lens then, but at a spot dangerously close. And an exact spot; remember, he is to convey a flicker of doubt—not a flicker of doubt as to where he should look, and so insidiously faithful is

Filming the art of theatrical make-up. Hereford C.S. are making a colour film on this subject with the co-operation of a local drama group. It will be shown to Women's Institutes and village drama groups throughout the county.



the lens that it will blurt out the whole story if given half a chance: 'Damn! I'm looking into the lens. Hell! I looked too low!'

The italics are mine. Ignoring the lens is the first step towards mastery of technique and learning how to relax. As an amateur actor you will be faced by fewer technicians and less apparatus than the staff and array of equipment described by Donat, but nevertheless the unit and their gear will be distracting at first, and you will have to learn to ignore them, too.

Getting to know the "mechanics" of a shot so that they can be carried out with absolute ease is every bit as important as conveying the right emotion. Your moves about the set, your "business" with props like a telephone or a revolver, must be rehearsed and timed to a nicety.

If the scene calls for you to be calm, you should play it as if you'd been born with the telephone or gun in your hand. To do this you must be sure that the telephone flex isn't going to get in your way and put you off, or that the gun won't stick in your pocket when the moment comes to produce it. Your acting will benefit if you know that these things aren't going to happen—and practice should ensure that they won't.

Props are unpredictable until you get the feel of them. Get to know all the possible snags in using them.

If the character is meant to be agitated, the actor must know just how much fumbling with telephone or gun is permissible; and the fumbling must be *acted* only. It is amazing how articles in everyday use become unfamiliar and awkward to handle when encountered on a film set.

Doing what comes naturally isn't always easy when filming. Odd though it may seem, many a player finds himself unable to sit down naturally when required to do so in a film. At the crucial moment—and it is crucial because the simple action worries him so—a gap presents itself between him and the chair. He's not quite sure how long a drop there is to the cushion.

Though you may not suffer from chair phobia, remember that you must always be sure of your moves, and that you should regard props as if they were fellow actors with whom you must co-operate if you are to expect co-operation in return. Your moves about the set should be so carefully worked out that you know precisely where each foot will be at a given moment of any shot. In violent scenes, or out of doors, it may



The foyer of the Telecinema at the South Bank Exhibition. The projection box is seen on the left. Visitors have been televised entering the cinema, and the picture shown simultaneously on the 15ft. screen.

Stereoscopic and Stereophonic Films

New ideas in production and presentation at the Festival Telecinema

By D. M. NEALE, B.Sc.

A veritable banquet awaits the amateur hungry for ideas when he visits the Telecinema at the South Bank Exhibition. For him the name is perhaps the least attractive part, since large-screen television has only a limited bearing on amateur cine work. Even so, he cannot be other than impressed by the bright 15 ft. television pictures having a definition comparable with 9.5mm. However, stereoscopic colour films take up most of the screen time, though it is hard to believe there is a screen when the picture apparently extends from inside the auditorium and away to infinity.

Auditorium—a place for hearing. And here there is really something to listen to. During the intervals stereophonic magnetic tape recordings provide music of remarkable quality and realism. One grotesque little piece goes hopping about all over the place, from front to back and even up to the roof! As many as four sound tracks are used at times, feeding three banks of loudspeakers behind the screen and others in the back wall and the ceiling.

Magnetic tape recordings are, of course, capable of quality far in advance of most disc or film records, but the distributed sound source is also responsible for part of the

improvement. Let any reader compare the effect of two spaced speakers with that of one. (Of course, he must "phase" them so that the cones move to and fro together.)

Stereophonic sound accompanies the films, too, allowing the sound source to follow the image across the screen. This has long been a dream of the cinema engineer. Why, I frankly cannot understand because I have yet to meet the person who is acutely conscious of the static central speaker of the conventional cinema. At 16mm. shows I have attended the speakers have been placed in all sorts of peculiar positions and in most cases the artificiality has soon been forgotten. Although our two ears can locate a sound source with surprising accuracy, the hypnotism of the picture completely overrides the aural evidence. Does not the sound seem to come from the picture of a television set, even though the speaker is below or at one side?

Stereophony seems most valuable for the off-screen noises. When the sound source is not seen, our ears at once try to locate it. In the Telecinema the speakers round the auditorium give this faculty full scope. A sound originating behind us can move forward until the object responsible appears

on the screen. The effect can be used dramatically or to enhance the illusion of reality.

Here is scope for experiment not only by the professional, but by the amateur also. No great deal of equipment is required; for a start, two turntables and pick-ups with suitable mixing circuits to feed two amplifiers and speakers are enough. Before the war I used such a set-up when showing films of the Hendon Air Display. Behind and incidentally well *above*, the audience one speaker played military band music. The volume was kept down and the tone control adjusted to imitate the metallic quality of public address speakers. A second speaker behind the screen faded in and out the appropriate aircraft noises to match the picture. As there is a danger of distracting attention from the screen, the volume of the postern speaker must be kept low except for certain dramatic effects.

Seating

In spite of the manifold problems arising from the use of a host of speakers, no echo or "standing-wave" effects are apparent in the Telecinema. No doubt a great deal of thought was expended on the acoustic design and treatment. Other factors have determined the general layout. For example, the floor of the stalls follows the "saucer" contour already used in some theatres. While the back rows are raked in the usual way, the front rows *rise* towards the screen to give everyone a comfortable yet unobstructed view of the screen.

The Cinema-Television projector was a major consideration. Although this is capable of giving a picture 21 ft. wide, a 15 ft. picture is all that is required for the Telecinema audience of 402. Nevertheless, to provide a really bright picture, a highly directional screen is needed, equivalent to the amateur's "silver" screen. Accordingly the seats are arranged close to the projector beam and with the gangways on the outside. (How often have we not seen the gangway down the centre when a beaded screen is in use? Occupants of the outside seats then see a very dim picture, and there are no seats in the best position.)

Most unusual is the position of the projection box. The theatre has a "lobster-claw" section with the projectors placed under the unusually long balcony. In this way the television projector is brought within 40 ft. of the screen and perpendicular

to it, important considerations dictated by the optical system. This arrangement means that all seats are close to the beam vertically as well as horizontally. The screen appears to be slightly dishd to make the very best of its directional properties. We amateurs cannot easily imitate this and must usually be content with a slight forward tilt of a silver screen to reflect the beam to the audience.

Austere Decorative Scheme

A somewhat austere note is struck by the decorative scheme in shades of blue-grey. It has, however, the great merit of eliminating colour adaptation and fatigue problems. What a lesson for those flashy "showmen" who insist on smothering the titles of every film with red and orange floodlights, only to find the opening shots which follow appear a ghastly green! Fear no such horrors at the Telecinema: everything is conducted with a quiet efficiency which is an object lesson in good taste and good timing.

During the interval the screen is covered by the Festival emblem executed on a white ground. Quite mysteriously the emblem fades away and we realise that it is painted on the slats of a large Venetian blind. When the slats are horizontal we see only the



The proscenium seen from the projection box. The Festival emblem is painted on the slats of a Venetian blind. The novel features of the screen surround are described on the next page.



Cinema television: the projection box as seen from the auditorium.

white edges. Silently the blind rises from sight, the lights dim and the show begins. Here is a good idea for our amateur pros-cenium-builders, for the mechanism to wind a Venetian blind is much simpler than that for the usual theatre curtains. The slats are light and lend themselves admirably to simple decoration by painting with a monogram or similar device.

Not even the black screen surround is retained by the Telecinema. Instead both the television and film projectors provide a substantially grey border around the screen. This gives the effect of a picture frame with a width about equal to a quarter of the picture height. As a result colour films present a subdued and natural appearance free from the "window into sunlight" effect of a hard black surround. Before the war a grey or pale lavender illuminated surround was suggested for colour films, but several factors delayed its introduction. If the surround has a constant colour and brightness it will still contrast unpleasantly with extremely light or dark shots and shots having a pronounced all-over colouring.

Ingenious Arrangement

This drawback has been overcome by making the colour and brightness of the surround dependent on the overall characteristics of the picture. An ingenious arrangement is used which reclaims the light normally wasted by the projector shutter and throws it on the surround. For this purpose the shutter is inclined at 45 degrees so that when it is covering the gate its polished face reflects the light beam upwards. A mirror reflects the light forward again to pass through the film three frames above the gate. Thus the intensity and colour of the beam are controlled by the picture on the

film. An auxiliary lens system is used to project the beam on to the screen surround, the screen area being exactly blocked out by a rectangular mask at the focal plane.

Since the beam is controlled by the picture three frames ahead of the gate, the modulation of the screen surround is only an eighth of a second ahead of the picture. Few of us will embark on comparable re-

construction of our projectors, however, and any similar control will have to be derived from a point above the upper sprocket. This will be some nine inches from the gate—two seconds running time on 16mm. and four on 8mm. Provided successive shots match reasonably well, such an arrangement should be perfectly satisfactory except that the occasional surprise shot might lose its effect through a premonitory change in the brightness and colour of the surround. All the same, it would make an interesting experiment and since we can conveniently use a second (low-powered) lamp to project through several frames at once, the equipment could be made as an attachment involving no modifications to the projector itself.

The Stereoscopic Films

The new screen surround proves of greatest value for the stereoscopic films which form the bulk of the Telecinema programme. Naturally enough, these impress the average visitor more than anything else. Attendants provide each member of the audience with a pair of polarising spectacles, rimless but for a frame across the top. They are conveniently used by people normally wearing spectacles and provide an unrestricted field of view for those who do not.

The two "lenses" are sheets of Polaroid set with the axes of polarisation at right angles. Two projectors running synchronously superimpose on the screen matched pictures representing right- and left-eye views of the scene. Without Polaroid spectacles the pictures appear blurred due to the parallactical differences between the two film records. However, each projector

uses a polarising filter corresponding to one eyepiece of the viewing spectacles.

The metal-surfaced screen reflects the projector beams without depolarising them and therefore each eye can see only the picture from one projector. In this way each eye is made to see the scene from a different viewpoint and an impression of solidity is produced by the different degrees to which the eyes have to converge to register the images of near and distant objects. With films in colour, the effect is amazingly realistic.

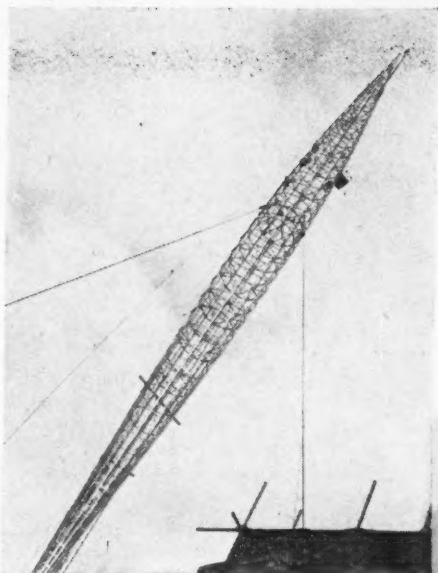
In a proportion of the stereo shots difficulty is experienced in combining the images mentally. This may be due to a variety of factors though some, such as the optimum convergence of the camera and projector lens axes, have presumably been studied by the technicians. The use of two 35mm. films for the pictures ensures good definition, though for some reason this is not quite up to the usual 35mm. standard.

Camera Movement Provides Parallax

In focusing our eyes on the screen we have to converge them as for an object at a fraction of the distance. It is not surprising, therefore, that some people experience a degree of eyestrain, though those who sat with me in the centre of the stalls had no complaints to make in this respect. As each new shot comes on the screen our eyes struggle to find the degree of convergence required. No doubt some of the strain comes from the ocular gymnastics involved at this stage, for the unconscious head movements which we normally make under similar circumstances provide no parallax evidence to assist us.

In this respect the choice of subject for the film, *Royal River*, is ideal. Taken almost entirely from a boat moving down-river, the continuous camera movement provides this much-needed parallax and, in addition, reinforces the stereoscopic effect. The illusion so produced is completely realistic—the screen disappears and the river flows from the far distance right into the audience and to within a few feet of the viewer. Any cine man seeing this will go home speculating on the possibilities of making stereo films himself. I hope to have something to say about this next month.

Space is running short, but I must mention just one more idea going begging at the Telecinema. One of the Technicolor stereo films gives the effect of an abstract ballet in cartoon. The principal "dancers" are rope-like figures which are recognisable as Lissajous figures formed by the trace on a cathode-ray tube. Here is an easy way of cutting out the tedium of cartoon work and yet keeping the medium under full control.



For human interest shots spend a few minutes round the Skylon. There is always a knot of people gazing at it—sometimes, indeed, a crowd. Their expressions are invariably an interesting study, offering you the opportunity of securing reaction close-ups which could go in other parts of your film as well as in the Skylon sequence.

POSTSCRIPT TO A FESTIVAL VISIT

By PROVINCIAL

I was lucky enough to be in London for a couple of days when the weather was perfect for filming, and, as I was able to pay brief visits to the South Bank Exhibition and the Fun Fair at Battersea, it occurred to me to list some "Do's" and "Don'ts", arising out of my own experience, in the hope that they might be of some help to those who will be in the Capital for only a day or so. (They will, of course, already have read the article by Mr. D. W. Samuelson in the May issue of *A.C.W.*, and formed some ideas from his suggestions.)

I "did" the Exhibition in the morning, and the Fun Fair in the afternoon, but the Festival Gardens were not then open.

First of all, the "Do's":

1. Arrive, if possible, before opening time and shoot some of the excellent colour material outside. (The use of colour film is assumed.)

2. Show opening of gates, and the queue of visitors entering. This provides a "lead" into the Exhibition.



Henry Moore at work on his *Reclining Figure*, one of the notable pieces of sculpture in the Exhibition grounds.

3. Except for shots deliberately composed to show design and colour, have plenty of people in the picture.

4. The most useful place to take shots with the human touch is around the Skylon. The people are so interested gazing at this wonderful structure that they are unaware of the camera's presence.

5. Contrast the modern style sculptures with the more orthodox shapes. (One comment that I heard about "*Reclining Figure*" was: "That's what we'll look like on the 8d. meat ration".)

6. Keep an eye open for celebrities, and include a few "stolen" shots, if possible.

7. Go on one of the larger boats, having an upper deck, to Battersea. The small water-bus is too low in the water.

8. Remember again to include passengers in the river shots. (Another reason for travelling on the larger boat.)

9. Get to Battersea in good time after lunch, and so avoid lengthy queues at the turnstiles.

10. Shoot the Emmett trains between 3 and 4 p.m. when the sun is clear of the neighbouring trees.

11. A stick, about chest height, with a screw to insert in the tripod bush, is a useful support. It could be made in two halves for convenience of carrying.

12. If a fence or rail is used to support the camera, make sure that there is no vibration.

And a few "Don'ts":

1. Unless the weather shows signs of becoming dull, don't shoot the film off too soon. Keep some until the last moment; you never know what will turn up. I lost two or three good opportunities through running out of stock.

2. Don't change film, except in a *really* dark place. You may become so used to the exceedingly bright conditions that there is the danger of under-estimating the strength of light in an *insufficiently* shaded spot.



The plaster cast of Epstein's new sculpture created for the Festival of Britain. In your Festival film why not take a few shots of contrasting types of sculpture—and keep your ears open for comments on them from the passer-by. They may provide material for a pithy sub-title.

3. Don't, in your anxiety, get in front of, or bump into, the other fellow who is shooting as well. There should be honour among cameramen!

Finally, a general comment. You will be filming something of the Festival events during the year in your own or a neighbouring town. Keep this in mind when in London, and aim at producing a film so shaped that it depicts both types of festival activity—Capital and Provincial—but treats them as a comprehensive whole. We are celebrating the Festival of Britain.

The International Amateur Film Festival (London and Glasgow, Aug. 11th—19th) has been accepted as part of Scotland's contribution to the Festival of Britain. Are you paying a visit? Prospectus from D. M. Elliot, Director, Scottish Film Council, 16/17, Woodside Terrace, Charing Cross, Glasgow, C.3, or from A.C.W.

IDEAS exchanged here

Letters for publication are welcomed, but the Editor does not necessarily endorse the views expressed. Address: "Amateur Cine World", Link House, 24 Store Street, London, W.C.1

LIGHT OUTPUT OF 200B

Sir,—I have read with considerable interest the several letters and articles on the 200B which have appeared in *A.C.W.* during the past few months. As an owner of one of these machines (110v., 200w.) without time for experiment or research I must confess I rely to a great extent on these items for almost everything I learn about it.

Up to now I have noted that every query or claim made in respect of this machine has been quickly disposed of by your own added notes or a further letter in the next issue. All except one. This is the query of Mr. L. S. Harris, Chatham, in the Feb. issue. He asked if anyone has ever checked the light output of the 200B on the lines of your test for new equipment.

There must be many people, like myself, who read your test records and are probably toying with the idea of investing in a new medium powered projector but have no notion of how the foot candles (?) mentioned compare with output of their own machine. It is this uncertainty which keeps some of us back, no doubt, and it would help me, at least, to make up my mind if I had this data.

Perhaps if you haven't made this test yourselves some kind reader will come forward with the necessary and help those of us who have come into the hobby since the test reports on these old machines were written in the dim past.

PETERBOROUGH.

W. R. REED.

Sorry, but we have no record of any light output tests for the 200B. They would be difficult to assemble because there are three groups of machine: those with mains voltage, 110 volt and 50 volt lamps, which progressively give brighter pictures, in that order. Again, so many keen operators have altered the shutter and so reduced the light.

A comparative test we saw recently between a 110 volt 200 watt 200B and a 30 volt 100 watt Specto showed the picture from the latter to be slightly brighter, but tests of this sort, though undoubtedly useful, are by no means absolute, for there are so many things to consider, e.g., were the lamps of comparable quality? Were they new? Were the resistances correctly set? Optics properly lined up? Everything clean? Notes on measuring screen brightness were given in our June issue.

COLOUR LIGHTING

Sir,—May I answer George Sewell's challenge to me to prove on an aesthetic and logical basis that a black-and-white image is better than one which is not quite black and white. Surely the latter is undesirable in that it is over-exposed (whether through bad photography or by coloured light is irrelevant). Since when was it artistic (or logical) for a projectionist to improve on an artist's work? If the director wishes the sequence to be an all-over colour he will use colour dyes, as I believe Rossellini did in *Stromboli*, otherwise leave his efforts alone.

There is no similarity at all between colour lighting and the tinting of a still photograph. The still man retains a sharp opaque image whereas the cine man is left with a washed-out image with extraneous light in the shadows.

We amateurs are unceasingly told not to splice colour and monochrome film together, as the result is jarring and very inartistic. Surely this applies even more forcefully to flooding the screen with coloured light as soon as the "End" is in sight?

The suggestion that the amateur consoles himself with toy cinemas because his films are not world beaters is an extremely defeatist one, calculated to belittle the amateur cine movement. It is not impossible for the Tenth Muse to get a shove up Parnassus from the amateur.

Regarding the "near rudeness" which Mr. Sewell notices in the correspondence columns, I agree it is all quite harmless. We many of us put acid in our ink, but if ever I meet my pen-opponent in the flesh I should be honoured and pleased to buy him a non-acid drink.

P.M.P. CINE UNIT, PETER A. PEARSE.
ESSEX.

SOUND REPRODUCTION

Sir,—I was very interested in Mr. J. Verney's notes on improvements in 16mm. sound reproduction. Some time ago good sound reproduction was a very big problem with me, as we were receiving many complaints from patrons of our mobile cinema.

One hall, in particular, had very bad acoustics, and often speech was unintelligible. A big cinema company had visited this hall previous to us, and apparently their sound reproduction was no better than ours. We were using a standard projector of well-known make, which functioned very well under good acoustical conditions, and its output was very near distortionless.

I experimented with several large amplifiers to no effect. Some improvements were obtained by dispensing with speaker baffles, but this was inconvenient and bad for the speakers (Goodman's 12in. Axiom). Eventually while trying out some treble boost circuits, I happened to test the amplifier with a 50pf. coupling condenser, and the results were surprising.

Apart from loss of gain, a real improvement was noticed in the reproduction, and practical results over the last few months have fully justified our design. Oscilloscope test shows that the output is far from distortionless, but the main point is that we can give crisp, clear and pleasant speech, and musical reproduction gives no grounds for complaint.

We have scrapped the commercial amplifier of 5 valves and 15 watts for a simple 2-stage job (1 Mullard EF40 and 1 EL42) built into a chassis 4 in. x 4 in. x 3 in. This gives ample reserve in a hall approx. 45 feet long, 20 feet wide and 18 feet high, holding over 100 patrons. On paper it may appear inadequate, but comparative tests with expensive equipment convince us that our requirements are fully met by this small amplifier. It will be interesting to hear of other exhibitors' experiences in this field.

KINGUSSIE, INVERNESS. IAN MACDONALD.

BRITISH MADE

Sir,—Now that the country is at least temporarily census-minded, I wonder whether it would be possible to organise a private census among amateur cinematographers to ascertain exactly what kind of apparatus they use. I am asking this because reference to your recent issues give one the impression that unless one is the proud owner of a Bolex or Kodak Special, one is completely out of the swim.

Your advertisement pages nowadays seem devoted to large, complicated and naturally expensive equipment, and this gives one the idea that all amateur cinematographers have unlimited money to burn. This impression is, I feel sure, quite wrong, and there must be thousands of enthusiastic, though impoverished, amateurs like myself who get endless pleasure out of much cheaper and less complicated equipment.

While on the subject of equipment, there is another point which I should like to mention. A short time ago, a friend of mine picked up a copy of *A.C.W.* in my house and, not being particularly interested in photography, glanced through it quickly in order to while away the time. When he had finished, he said to me: "I can't understand why we don't make any cine cameras in this country". After hearing this, I also took a look through *A.C.W.* and was astonished to see how very little prominence was given to British-made goods.

A Worthwhile Purchase

This touched me on the raw, for I am the possessor of an 8mm. Dekko which I purchased three years ago and with which I am delighted. Since its purchase, I have exposed 1,200 feet of Kodachrome and 400 feet of monochrome (mostly abroad) and the results are as good as anyone could wish for. In addition to the normal lens, I have a 1½ in. Dallmeyer telephoto which I find most satisfactory.

In case you may think I am a beginner at the game, I should like to point out that I have been an enthusiastic still photographer for the past forty-two years, and a cine worker since 1926 when I purchased a hand-turned Pathe-Baby. So long as I remained in this country, I found this 9.5mm. camera to be quite satisfactory, but when I started to use it in the tropics, I had such endless trouble with jamming inside the charger that I sold the instrument.

Later, on a friend's recommendation I bought a Campro, which combined the duties of camera and projector. Unfortunately the "cam" part was quite good but the "pro" was most unsatisfactory and I parted with it at bargain price. After war finished, I looked round for a good second-hand camera and bought an 8mm. machine of a famous foreign make which was reputed to be in good order, having only recently been overhauled.

Nothing but Trouble

I had nothing but trouble with it through persistent loss of bottom loop and consequent piling-up of film inside the camera. After ruining four precious films, I sent it back to the makers who kept it two months. It arrived back just as I was going abroad and I took it with me, but to my horror, there was very little improvement and out of the eight films which I exposed, three were ruined through a recurrence of the old trouble.

In complete disgust, I returned the instrument to the dealer from whom I purchased it, and he refunded my money on the condition that I purchased a new

instrument from him. This was how I came to own a Dekko, and although I may cast envious eyes at photographs in the *A.C.W.* of opulent and sleek Bolex, Kodak Special and Webo owners, I am quite convinced that my little Dekko will more than hold its own against anything that overseas manufacturers can send us at anything like competitive prices. Beyond being a most satisfied customer, I disclaim any connection whatsoever with Dekko's.

ELY, CAMBS.

H. VINITH WILLIAMS.

A RECORD ?

Sir,—When a friend of mine asked me a few days ago to give a film show to a few children at a party to be held in one of the local assembly halls, I pointed out that my projector, a Home Movie, was not really suitable for use in a large hall, but on his assurance that there would not be many children and that I could show the films in one corner of the room, I arrived with projector, a 24 in. x 36 in. home-made screen and films.

No fewer than 150 youngsters greeted me, all eagerly waiting to see Charlie Chaplin, Felix and the rest! My friend had done his best to black out the room but some of the windows were too big, and the room was far from being dark.

I gave the show, and all the children enjoyed it. Afterwards I wondered if I had made a record. Some people call the Home Movie "Old Faithful". I certainly agree.

Thank you for *A.C.W.* It's a good magazine all round.

JAMES LISTER.

Has anyone given a show to a larger audience with a Home Movie or similar projector? We should like to know.

JUST PLAYING AROUND ?

Sir,—Mr. Stanley Reed has recently said that the cine clubs are not interested in films as such but only in playing around with their cameras. I think that *A.C.W.*, although an admirable magazine, may be partly to blame. It deals extensively with technical problems and shows how they may be overcome by boring holes in expensive apparatus to insert Govt. surplus cog wheels or by setting up such circuits as "Separate—1 x SPST and 1 x SPDT. Combined—1 x DPDT". This, no doubt, is of some interest to those who, unlike myself, can understand a word of it. However, surely a better understanding of the more imaginative processes of film making is of far greater importance.

I would welcome more articles on script-writing (but no more ready-made scripts);

more about directing and editing and fuller analyses of interesting amateur productions. At present, though, I am afraid that even "A Lone Worker's Diary" shows a preference for perforated zinc (meat safe variety) and tin-tacks.

I think the lone worker suffers from three main disadvantages: cost (the solution I have found is the use of 8mm.), cast (I wish I could find many more volunteers prepared to behave in the extraordinary manner my scripts demand) and the inability to see very many other amateur productions (I'd like to see as many 8mm. films as I could borrow). Even so, I prefer the lone worker's lunacy to the inner emptiness of so many club productions and only wish that the *A.C.W.* could inaugurate some scheme by which the lone workers, especially, could see more of each other's achievements.

SALTFORD, BRISTOL.

PHILIP GROSSET.

How about joining one of the *A.C.W. Cine Circles*? (Details on page 227). We have from time to time covered the subjects our correspondent suggests. A detailed series on editing is due to begin in the autumn. The difficulty about giving advice on the creative aspects of film work is that they are essentially personal aspects; and generalising on a personal matter doesn't usually help much. However, we'll do our best.

READY-MADE SCRIPTS

Sir,—Oswell Blakeston's scripts have been eagerly and carefully read. I hope this feature will reappear in *A.C.W.* at a not too distant date. I don't remember anyone mentioning them in the correspondence columns, but they seem to me to be more useful and important than notes about prosceniums and their accessories.

LEICESTER P.S. CINE GROUP.

R. HILL.

AMATEUR CINE IN AMERICA

Sir,—I feel I must bring Mr. Miller to task for his remark (May) that "were 9.5mm. on the American market, it would seriously challenge, if not oust, 8mm." Unfortunately he has overlooked two very important conclusions, both of which were forcibly brought home to me during a recent visit to America.

The first thing I noticed was that the average film maker over there is the non-technical, baby-on-the-lawn type. There is no attempt at planning, and the films themselves are really little more than animated snapshot albums. Nobody bothers about elaborate prosceniums, electrically operated curtains, pop-up organs and the like; I attended many amateur film shows, and in most of them the projectionist merely placed his screen (if he had one) on a convenient table, and got on with the job. No attempt was made to fill a large picture

area; the usual size was rather less than the size of the screen itself—entirely adequate for the small audience.

It follows, I think, that the majority of Americans will go for a gauge which gives them the largest footage at the lowest cost, rather than the one which gives a larger picture area but is much more expensive on the basis of running time.

I could not help noticing also, that most Americans shoot in colour as naturally as we do in black-and-white. Most of them use it too much to be ever able to leave it. Were 9.5mm. introduced, colour film would be so expensive that most movie-makers would be obliged either to cut their footage or choose black-and-white. Both courses would be equally repugnant to most of them.

I may say, in conclusion, that Messrs. Pathe are marketing their 16mm. Webo Special over there, but have never made any attempt to introduce the gauge for which they are famous. I think it is a wise decision.

AMPLEFORTH COLLEGE, P. P. MURRAY.
YORK.

MIAMI BEACH SCENE

Sir,—Americans are great cine fans. Down at the beach on a Sunday it seems that every other person is carrying a Bolex or 70DA. Prices are reasonable, too; I was offered a Bolex H16 with 1 in. and 3 in. lenses for 125 dollars, secondhand. I have not seen the activities of any local cine club yet but think the average cine man here is content with snapshots, more or less.

I became interested in cine work about three years ago, graduating from ten years of 35mm. Leica and Contax work. A cartoonist by profession and a musical student, I wrote dozens of scripts for recordings of Grieg and Chopin. Pity my poor suffering wife! In a few months' time I hope to have my first film completed.

Thank you for producing a fine magazine, the arrival of which is eagerly awaited each month.

MIAMI, FLORIDA. DENNIS RYAN.

TAKING YOUR CAMERA ABROAD

Sir,—I cannot agree that the Customs will not issue a certificate before leaving the U.K. I have attended by appointment at my Local Customs Office and have always been granted a most detailed certificate showing camera and lens numbers, etc. If you produce your purchase receipt this also will be recorded. The address of the nearest Customs officer will be found in the telephone directory.

I have landed at most ports here, with my

annual certificate, and it has never been questioned. In fact, on its production the Port Officer has always been satisfied and pleased to have found his work lessened. Once only (at Newcastle) was I asked to identify the equipment mentioned in the certificate.

If you are apprehensive anent film stock, buy this before your local visit and produce it. It will be noted on your certificate.

LONDON, W.8. C. H. CLOSE.

Many readers will be glad to have this re-assuring information. It should be noted, however, that the Customs will not issue a certificate at the time of your actual departure from U.K. It must be obtained beforehand.

ITALIAN TOUR

Sir,—Reference "Taking Your Camera Abroad" (June) it is my experience that 9.5mm. film cannot be obtained in almost any town in Europe. Last summer, after obtaining from Messrs. Pathescope the name of their Rome agent, I spent a few weeks in N. Italy. All went well until I ran out of stock. In Venice, only 16mm. was available and I was assured by the assistants at three shops that I would not be able to get 9.5mm. anywhere there. In Turin, where I also stopped, 9.5mm. was obtainable only to order (presumably from Rome). And so it went on. Wherever I tried, 16mm. was available in large quantities, but not so 9.5mm. I even went to the trouble of asking friends in Italy if they could arrange for stock to be available for me, but to no purpose.

Mr. Alder is very right about the Customs officers. They are decent, hardworking and harassed individuals. Declare everything, don't be clever and you will find that you are treated very fairly. I venture to suggest that they no more like charging duty than we do paying it.

Best wishes again to your excellent magazine.

HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL. GEOFFREY BILLSON.

FILTER HOLDER FOR SPORTSTER

Sir,—In his letter in the June issue, Mr. A. J. McNally states that it has not been possible to obtain a filter mount for the Bell & Howell 8mm. Sportster. Readers may be interested to know that there is no need to go to the trouble of making a mount out of nasal dropper bottle tops or any other sundry, as we can supply the correct filter holder complete with yellow filter ready to screw into the 12½mm. f/2.5 lens for the modest price of 16s. 3d.

WALLACE HEATON, LTD. A. J. COOPER.
Tech. Manager, Cine Dept.



All Ten Best winners attended the shows—nine of them at the final performance, when the plaques were presented. Left to right: F. C. Gradwell (*Paradise Cove*), John Aldred (*Antiquities of Wycombe*), J. Barton (*Go West, Young Man*), H. Jansz and L. J. Peries (*Farewell to Childhood*), Enrico Cocozza (*Chick's Day*), Donald James (*How to Catch a Burglar*), Charles Carson (*Lady for Lunch*) and Bill Dobson (*His Crumbling World*).

What They Thought of the 1950 Ten Best

As is invariably the case, opinions on the Ten Best differ very considerably. Here are a few representative letters on this year's films. Four of the seven films shown are acclaimed by correspondents as the 'best' of the bunch, with most votes for "*Go West, Young Man*".

A YEAR FOR COMEDY

Sir,—An interesting lot of films this year. I am most grateful for the opportunity of seeing them. But I must say right away that the one I liked least was *Chick's Day*. This is not to say that of its kind it is not quite good, and I can well understand the reasons that made the judges put it into top place. As a professional, however, I find the film lacking in the honest, clean approach of the best amateur work, and in the form and restraint of the professional.

It has, for example, much less sureness of touch than *Paper Boat*, in my opinion. And one always rather expects the twang of the zither. It is an implied compliment that I compare the film with a professional one, but its outstanding fault is the characteristic defect of amateur films: the author doesn't know when to stop. The ending, too, is just weak and unsatisfying.

My favourite is emphatically *Go West, Young Man*. Have you, Sir, ever heard real belly laughs before at a show of an amateur film to a public audience not packed with friends of the author? Mr. Barton has that rare gift, a sense of humour allied to a sense of timing, with not a little dash of sympathy and sensitivity—yes, I said sensitivity. Go ahead and do some more, Barton! What about a film all about your brother Dick?

It is noticeable how much humour there is this year—humour, that most difficult of all things, yet here done so well. In *Lady for Lunch* Carson works some old gags, but because of the restraint he employs, they come off very effectively. Donald James greatly improves on last year's *The Beginning*, but his film is still both technically and constructionally one of the most ragged of the Ten. As for Barton's dead-pan cowboys, the remarkable thing is that he has managed in some way to invest Meccano wheels with expression.

The other main group is of *genre*, or more exactly, character studies. *Chick's Day*, *Farewell to Childhood*, and *His Crumbling World* (although regrettably it cannot be included in the public programme, I have had the privilege of seeing the last-mentioned). *Chick's Day* does manage to establish something of the character of Chick and his companions and the conditions under which they live, but there are some incidents which strain one's credulity. I feel the author has gone a little outside the limits of his understanding, not of films but of human beings, and that at times his characters degenerate into puppets.

The girl in *Farewell to Childhood* I find a little difficult to believe in at all, and I was never sure whether the other woman was her mother, her sister, or what. I get the feeling that the authors have put on the screen a character that behaves as they think she should behave, but that more experience (or more research) would considerably have modified some of their sequences.

As the Editor has truly said, in *His Crumbling World* Bill Dobson shows an astonishingly mature touch. One can feel that Bill has something of that love of the countryside that is evident in his chief character. It is that sympathy between them, combined with the natural dignity and poise of the old Scotsman, and young Bill's powers to observe and use homely things that makes this film more than worthy of its place among the Ten. That, even though he has dropped one or two quite large clangers when it comes to continuity and plausibility. Look to your laurels, you others! Bill is going to be a formidable competitor in the years to come.

Paradise Cove is one third the length of last year's *Eggs for Breakfast*, and to that extent I prefer Mr. Gradwell's film to Mr. Bowen's. It is so much more pithy and fresh. Mr. G. has not given the subject more footage than it warrants.

Bobby, Our Robin can also be compared with its predecessor, *Nature's Way*. Last year Mr. Baines attained amazing levels of technique and preserved excellent continuity. My old friend John Chear (Yes, Mr. Hughes, another of 'em!) is sometimes content with less brilliant technique, but he has brought to his own work the spirit of gentle humour and appreciation of his bird subjects as individuals with character that makes him unique in this very specialised field of cinematography.

I haven't seen *Antiquities of Wycombe and Nanhurst*, unfortunately, but I realise your quandary. You either show fairly short extracts of all the films (which isn't fair to the makers), or someone has to be left out. I think this year's decision is the right one.

I observe that you are paying your competitors the very real compliment of

making the definition of amateur as broad as possible. That is the highest tribute you could pay to the excellence of the work that is being sent in to you. I would go even further. Why not cut out any question of whether competitors are amateur or professional; merely stipulate the conditions under which a film can be made, e.g., that it must be made on the same size as that in which it is submitted, and so on. I don't think amateurs will have much to fear—and won't the Ten Best lads be able to feel proud! And talking of lads, when are we going to have a girl among the Ten Best?

GEORGE H. SEWELL.

NOTE OF GLOOM

Sir,—Ten Best? Never! I admired Mr. Chear's patience and skill in obtaining the shots for *Bobby, Our Robin*, but that's all. The shots are strung together with indifferent titles and the film becomes boring after the first five minutes. Audience reaction: fair. *Lady for Lunch*: a neat idea, but my goodness! what a scrappy film! Audience reaction: fair.

Farewell to Childhood: a character study, so the programme said. Judging by the audience reaction, the study was only clear to the producers. *Go West, Young Man*: excellent. My idea of a Ten Best winner. Original and neatly executed. Audience reaction: very good. *How to Catch a Burglar*: very good, but a poor print and bad sound track; however, as it is an amateur recording I'll let it pass. Audience reaction: favourable.

Paradise Cove: The carefully selected close-ups and beautiful expression on the children's faces made up for a lot of the meaningless dissolves, fades, etc. Audience reaction: good. *Chick's Day*: had it not been



"Audience reaction: very good." A photograph taken during one of the performances of "Go West, Young Man", by J. Barton, a comedy featuring Meccano puppets.

for the account in the May issue of *A.C.W.* I really would not have known what it was all about. A long drawn out, in parts under-exposed, rather hard to follow, boring film. Audience reaction: good acting, but thank goodness that's over!

What is the good of a panel of experts judging a film and giving awards for technical reasons when the film does not have audience appeal? No, sir, you have *not* selected the Ten Best. To prevent this mistake happening again, why not base your selection on audience reaction? The audience is the final stage in the production and presentation of a film. Let it be the judge!

RUGBY.

F. SZEKELY.

ENJOYMENT

Sir,— . . . We very much enjoyed the show, and I am able to tell members we can look forward to a grand entertainment in November.

EDINBURGH CINE SOCIETY. W. S. DOBSON.

REAL ENTERTAINMENT

Sir,—I had been warned by my fellow mobile exhibitors that amateur films are for the most part exercises in technique, of interest to other amateurs, but not necessarily acceptable by the general public. However, I have always wanted to present the Ten Best to the public in my locality and, as you are aware, I have booked this year's programme, though I must confess I felt it a risky undertaking particularly since I had to book the films blind.

Having attended the premiere, however, I would like you to know that I personally considered it a first class show, of real entertainment value. I am delighted to be presenting them and can only hope they will leave their mark on those people who have blood and not film cement in their veins. Indeed I am so determined that our presentation shall be worthy of the films that I am hoping to arrange for the personal appearance of some of the producers, thereby helping to forge a link between the films and the non-amateur members of the audience.

Lest my status as a professional exhibitor presenting amateur films be misunderstood, may I say that I am truly an amateur at heart. I began as one (you published a letter from me in *A.C.W.* for Nov., 1934) and via Gaumont-British and the British Film Institute (to both of which bodies I am most grateful) I have been able to fulfil a lifelong ambition: to run my own film shows (though, I have to admit, with not too much monetary return). Films to me are indeed



Jack Ralph, organiser of the film side of the Festival of Britain, presents J. Barton with his plaque at the final performance of the Ten Best at the Royal Empire Society's theatre last month.

an abiding joy and a passion, and I look forward to sharing that joy with others at my Ten Best presentation in a 1,000-seater hall.

LONDON, S.E.26.

J. H. WILLIAMS.

The presentations by Williams' Cine and Public Address Services will be given at Lewisham Town Hall, Catford, S.E.6, on June 18th and 19th. Since it is not a club show (Entertainment tax having been paid) it is not essential to book in advance. Details in the Diary on page 279.

INDIGESTION

Sir,—I think the greatest factor militating against complete satisfaction was the number of films in the programme. Only in a news theatre are we confronted with so many films in so short a space of time, and in that case the films are not really important to us, as are the Ten Best. It would be surprising if at the end of the evening we were not suffering from a kind of mental indigestion.

The changes of subject, style and mood are so great and follow one another so rapidly that each succeeding film tends to obliterate its predecessors. Hardly any of the films lasts long enough to capture the full attention of the audience, and we have scarcely come to distinguish one character from another before 'The End' flashes on the screen; and before we have had time to collect our thoughts, the next winner is upon us. We long to stop the show, ask to see that film again—and please, Mr. Projectionist, run it a little slower so that its fleeting moments may be captured in the memory!

I know amateurs cannot afford to make long films (my entry was but a mere 120 ft.) but is it giving the short film a chance making it compete with six others in quick succession? A possible improvement—if the seven films must be shown in one programme—might be to include more information about each in the programme, raising the house lights in the short intervals

between the films so that the audience may prepare itself for the next 'epic'.

Perhaps a more satisfactory solution might be the disc jockey technique, introducing each film with a few words from the stage or via the loudspeakers and so, with the aid of suitable music, smooth out the transition from film to film. The idea may appear revolting on paper, but I believe it could, if intelligently done, materially assist the audience to appreciate the films.

What about the three films not shown? Can we see them? I would like to substitute at least one of them for one of the seven. After all, they are all prizewinners and deserve fair distribution.

LONDON, N.13.

R. V. PRIME.

We do indeed appreciate that it is unfair to both producers and audience not to give all the films the same distribution, and we are much exercised about it, but it has never been possible to show all Ten in the same programme. Even seven Mr. Prime finds indigestible when they follow each other without pause—though there is an interval after the fourth. This year we decided on a two hour show. Previous programmes have been a little longer, but experience with the provincial shows over the past two years indicates that cuts are desirable. It must be remembered that comfortable tip-up seats are not available in all the halls in which the films are presented. In compiling the programme we aim at variety, so unfortunately the longer films have often (but not always) to be omitted. It so happens that the longer films are this year the meatier ones, and their omission cost us a keener pang than usual.

On the face of it there is a strong case for circulating alternative programmes but in practice it would involve too many variables: in booking, production of printed programmes, spooling, despatch, etc. We think we should point out that no other amateur cine magazine or organisation in the world circulates amateur films on the scale of the Ten Best; indeed, so far as we know, there is no other magazine that does—and we can only do so by standardising procedure and administration as far as possible.

FOR WHOM THE APPLAUSE?

Sir,—I found *Farewell to Childhood* the most satisfying of the films because of its sensitiveness and delicacy and because it compliments the audience by demanding that they bring something to it. *Chick's Day* I thought the most gripping, but it did not hold me as it should have done because it did not invite audience co-operation as did

Farewell to Childhood. The story was all too crystal clear, with heavy underlining, dotted i's and crossed t's.

The best comedy was certainly *Go West, Young Man*, and although I would not willingly have missed it, I must confess that the enthusiastic applause it received raised a disquieting doubt in my mind. How much of the applause was for Mr. Barton's skill and wit, and how much, unconsciously, was for you, for I understand that, when first submitted for the Ten Best, it was nearly twice its present length, and that it was cut and re-edited on your advice?

LONDON, N.2.

C. A. HARTLEY.

The applause was all for Mr. Barton—and deservedly so. The only cut of any importance was the elimination of one short sequence in monochrome (he had run out of colour stock). The sudden eruption of black-and-white struck a jarring note, particularly since the backgrounds were those previously seen in colour. Two or three close-ups were also trimmed. Such slight modifications as we have suggested have been of a purely mechanical nature. Obviously we should not interfere with the editing to the extent of altering its character, for that would defeat one of the main purposes of the competition. Our correspondent himself supplies the justification for these minor excisions when he writes: "I would not willingly have missed it", for he probably would have missed it had they not been made.

WEEK-END SCHOOL

Sir,—The School in Cinematography held at Great Missenden Abbey from Friday, April 20th until the following Sunday was not only very instructive but the beautiful building and grounds together with the perfect summer-like weather gave all of the students a most enjoyable week-end.

I wish to give these words of appreciation to our instructors who not only were all well versed in their subject but never lost patience or interest in the many questions asked of them at all times of the day. Particularly I wish to thank Mr. Sewell for always showing an interest in the problems and experiences of all of us. When a professional gives of his time to help amateurs he must indeed be very attached to the work he has decided to make his career.

We all agreed that the class should be held again in the near future.

NORTHAMPTON.

SYDNEY GOODMAN.



Rapt attention. This photograph and that on the opposite page were taken during one of the screenings of "Chick's Day", by Enrico Coccozza.



DING DONG

Sir,—I must say that it is extremely interesting to read "Ideas Exchanged Here". In the April issue it was "prosceniums, etc.—yes or no?" At first I thought perhaps I was reading the letters to the editor in "The Times" discussing the admiral for the U.N. navy, the meat situation, the taxes, or the Stone of Scone.

It is nice to know that everyone is so irrevocably set in his opinions as to whether home cinemas should (should not) have coloured lighting and tip-up seats, that 8mm. (9.5mm.) (16mm.) is better than the other two, that the word "shot" is (is not) cinematographic in origin, that gadgetry is (is not) essential to a movie camera, that Mr. Verney has (has not) the right idea, that "freshness" supersedes (does not supersede) "technique" in direction, or that colour has more (less) (the same) potentialities than (as) black and white.

England has united to survive strikes, buzz-bombs, crises, and governments—let us hope she is not divided by film gauges or remote-controlled curtains.

VANCOUVER, B.C.

DAVID HUGHES.

FARMER'S REDUCER

To Sound Track

Sir,—Ferricyanide/hypo reducer does *not* increase contrast (Running Commentary, April). Try it out for yourself sometime (objectively) and see! Also consult P. Glafkides' "Chémie Photographique" (Paris, 1949), pp. 94-5 and C. E. K. Mees's "Theory of Photographic Process" (Macmillan, N.Y., 1948), p. 544. About time this Farmer's fallacy was scotched.

LONDON, S.W.3.

DENNIS F. KEMP.

From Sound Track

Sir,—Agreed no theoretical change in contrast, but in practice a big change. Try it for yourself and see. Suppose the film has four depths, A, B, C and D. As developed it is so dark that the projector light only penetrates A. On the screen contrast is thus limited to black/A. After reduction it penetrates A, B, C and D. Contrast is thus increased fourfold,

SOUND TRACK.

TESTIMONIAL FOR 8mm.

Sir,—Here is another shovelful of controversy to feed the flames of the gauges conflagration.

As secretary of a production unit covering all three gauges I ought perhaps to express no opinion. In fact I do not. My testimonial for 8mm. comes not from my pen and is quite unsolicited.

Last year I made a film of an International Tramping Tours holiday in the Pyrenees, called "Pyrenees Tramp". This voluntary organisation borrowed it several times for showing, and to determine whether or not they would have it copied for propaganda purposes. When the Manchester group of I.T.T. had the loan of it I wrote to enquire how the show had gone.

Wrote back the secretary: "We were rather misled over what size audience to cater for in connection with 8mm. film. Those who should know told us that only 50 people could see the film comfortably. Of course *this was quite wrong*. We will be ready with the right ideas next time".

They did decide to have the film copied—on to 16mm. and 8mm.

NORTHAMPTON.

LOUIS N. WARWICK.

INVITATION

Sir,—From time to time it has occurred to me that those interested in amateur cine work may be glad to know that this Evening Institute is in the position to offer facilities likely to be of great help and interest to them.

We are able to offer suitable accommodation, instruction and the use of appropriate apparatus in connection with amateur cine film productions, and in this regard I shall be glad to be of help to any individual or society who may care to write to me at the address below.

The Institute is situated in an accessible position fairly near King's Cross with Caledonian Road Underground Station (Piccadilly line) just round the corner.

C. T. BIRD.

(Principal)

L.C.C. Islington Men's Evening Institute,
Robert Blair School,
Blundell Street,
Holloway, N.7.



Before starting work on the proscenium, Planet members made a scale model of the platform end of the hall to assist in visualising what the final result should be.



Making a grille used for decorating the proscenium. All the decorations, display boards and set pieces were made in the studio, which meant that . . .

I suppose we must all admit that putting on a film show can be a somewhat thankless task. The more smoothly the show runs, the less anyone in the audience thinks about either the operators or the work that has been put in beforehand by way of preparation. On the face of it, nothing could be simpler than to put some films through a projector and play some gramophone records while you do it.

Unfortunately, most of us know from experience that films can break and appear upside down or the wrong way round, partially off the screen and out of rack. Projector lamps can burn out, fuses can blow . . . in fact, the potential sources of disaster are legion.

When we were asked to undertake the 1950 Ten Best Premiere Presentation we determined that we would do all that we could to avoid mishaps and hitches of any kind. We knew, from long experience of our own club shows, that no one can prepare for everything, but at least we could try.

A Vital Factor

The first task was to book a hall. A convenient situation in central London was the first consideration, coupled, if possible, with comfort and pleasant surroundings. Another vital factor was size. With normal substandard projection equipment, an 8 ft. picture and an audience of four or five hundred is probably the largest scale performance that can be satisfactorily achieved. Arc projectors open up possibilities of a larger picture with adequate illumination, but, as we have discovered in the past, there seems to be no system, up to the present, of avoiding a noticeable

PUTTING ON

A member of the Planet Film Society d

loss of colour rendering of Kodachrome film. We therefore decided to stick to filament lamp lighting.

The hall at the Royal Empire Society in Northumberland Avenue seemed to us to be a good answer to our problem. Seating about 380 people, it gave us a throw of 65 feet.

Division of Responsibility

Having booked the hall and ordered tickets and hand-out leaflets, we divided ourselves into groups, each responsible for a separate aspect of the show. Two members were in charge of ticket sales—no small task in this case. The largest group volunteered to attend to decorating the hall and foyer. Groups were responsible for projection, lighting and power, and musical accompaniments respectively. Members of each group visited the hall some weeks before the show to make notes, take measurements and plan their own department.

By far the largest task was the decoration of hall and foyer. At one end of the hall was a platform, but there was no proscenium. We therefore decided to build one, constructing it in sections to facilitate removal from the club studio to the hall. A scale model of the platform end of the hall was made, and this greatly assisted members of the group in visualizing the most suitable type of proscenium, this latter



... some thorny transport problems had to be solved, the way out from the club premises involving some difficulties. Here are some of the display boards being brought down.

A PREMIERE

cribes how they presented the Ten Best

also being added to the model in correct scale. Construction of the real thing was then put in hand. It was faced with corrugated cardboard, sprayed with paint, and hung with hessian drapes.

Other members of the group were busy making cardboard stars with which to adorn both this and the curved wooden border which was placed along the front of the stage. Behind this border were hidden the row of jars accommodating the flowers. All the blooms were artificial and made by the members themselves.

Projection

Stills from most of the Ten Best films were placed on mountings cut out of thin white card and suitably lettered. Direction signs for balcony and stalls and a draped table accommodating the silver plaques were other items in the care of the group. When completed, all the decorations were sprayed with fire-proofing solution to comply with regulations.

The projection group consulted their lens tables and calculated that 3 inch lenses would just fill an 8 ft. screen when projecting from the back of the hall. The proposal that we should project from the balcony was rejected for several reasons. We could not have access to the projection box because it was full of 35mm. equipment; the downward

(Continued on next page)



Top picture: a lorry brings the gear to the hall. On the left is an Oscar on its pedestal, destined for the foyer. In the photograph immediately above members are seen erecting the proscenium.

The presentation by the Planet Society of the A.C.W. Ten Best premiere provided a particularly happy framework for the films, because although those screened probably lack the substance and technical assurance of last year's set, they are in many respects fresher and more truly amateur in the best sense of the word. And that also describes the presentation. The hall is used as a cinema (it has a well equipped 35mm. projection room) but it has no proscenium. So Planet built their own. They happily and expertly improvised, exhibiting a fine team spirit (we were surprised to find so many members at work when we arrived a few hours before the first show) and succeeded in communicating their zest to the audience.

All the shows ran smoothly but there was no slavish adherence to the arid austerities of split-second timing. These were shows of films made by enthusiasts for an audience that shared their enthusiasm for amateur cinematography.

angle from the balcony would have produced a distorted picture shape, and wide angle lenses of the order of 40mm. would have been required. We preferred the definition of the longer focus type. Long focus lenses, however, are usually associated with smaller apertures than standard 2 in. lenses; we were fortunate in having the loan of two 3 in. f/1.8 lenses from G.B. Equipments, who also kindly loaned us two projector stands.

It was decided that all apparatus should be duplicated. Three Bell & Howell sound projectors were provided by members, two

for use alternately and one as a spare. All were mounted and framed and focused on the screen so that should the standby be required, the delay would be negligible. Fortunately, the third machine was not needed.

Precautions

We could have spooled each half of the programme on a single 1,600 ft. spool, but did not do so because of the possibility of dirt accumulating in the gate during such a long continuous run. Instead, each half was accommodated on two spools. When a number of performances are to be given there is always the possibility that one reel may be overlooked during rewinding. As a precaution, all reels had *white* leaders and *black* ends, so that any operator not finding white film on the front of his reel was forewarned. These white leaders were clearly marked with blooming ink with both numbers and film names.

Two members were responsible for stage lighting. (Coloured floods, controlled by dimmers, illuminated the screen and proscenium.) These members also laid both lighting and speaker cables down the centre of the hall under the carpet. The hall electrician was contacted and he not only told us just where the fuses were but put new fuse wire in, just to make sure! Fuses can so easily be the one thing overlooked.

The music department, like the projectionists, duplicated the whole of their equipment. A complete spare set of twin turntables, amplifier and speaker was wired up for immediate use at any time during the performances. The sound system used was one built by a member, feeding a Bi-tone speaker with monitor speaker at the projection end. The maximum output of 18 watts was never called for. A microphone enabled announcements to be made.

Eight Spare Lamps!

Cue sheets and general instructions were issued to each operator. A start mark was provided on the beginning of each reel so that the picture would commence immediately the projector was switched on and no white flashes on the leaders would be projected on to the screen. Binoculars were provided to assist in checking focus from the back of the hall. I counted no fewer than eight spare projector lamps carefully kept handy by the projectionists! Each machine was fitted with a new lamp before the show commenced.

Some of the prizewinners provided suggestions as to the music for their films. We could collect very few of the records



specified, so worked out our own score in every case. All records were labelled with a number and filed in a record case, and an elaborate cue sheet was prepared. Three people were kept busy throughout the shows, the sound operator merely twiddling his mixers while one assistant produced the records in sequence and filed them away again. The third merely watched the screen for change-over cues. The one sound-on-film picture was threaded on a separate machine.

During the four performances we were not once called upon to put into use the duplicate apparatus. Nevertheless, the rather lavish provision of standby equipment did much to give us confidence and was more than worthwhile on this score alone. The sound department needed a certain amount of light to find their way through their somewhat complicated score, so to avoid distracting the attention of the audience they operated behind a screen. We did not screen the projectors as we felt that an audience of amateur enthusiasts would probably prefer the more intimate arrangement of being able to turn round and see the type of projection equipment we were using.

On the one occasion when, despite all our precautions, a slight mishap occurred, the audience gave every sign of entering into the spirit of the thing and took it as a joke! A large number of members worked for a long time, but all agreed that they thoroughly enjoyed being given the honour of presenting the 1950 Ten Best Premiere.

A Word from a Member of the Audience

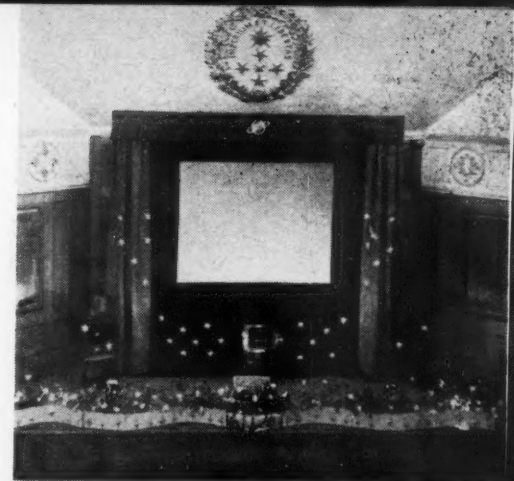
Sir,—Let me say how much I enjoyed the show. The whole thing was excellent, and Planet are to be congratulated on their presentation. Obviously, from the applause, *Go West, Young Man*, went down best with the audience, and here again Planet's turntable expert deserves a specially good word. LIVERPOOL, 16.

G. H. HESKETH.

TEN BEST IN AUSTRALIA

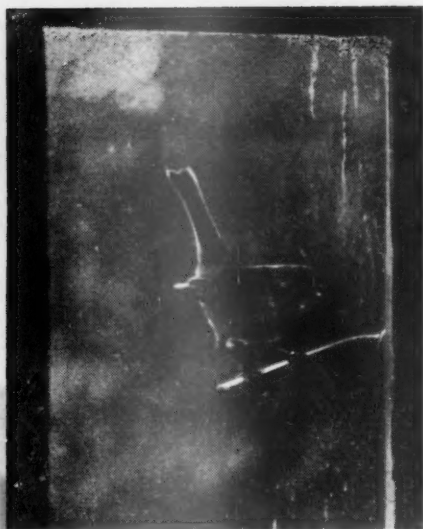
Sir,—It is not often that we in Queensland have the opportunity of seeing overseas amateur films. The 1948 Ten Best drew a capacity house. They were very well received, *Marionettes* and *Account Settled* seeming to be the favourites. Two thousand people saw the public screening of the last Queensland A.C.S. prize winning films, shown for three nights in our Albert Hall!

As a journalist as well as an amateur movie maker, I would like to compliment you on *A.C.W.* With restrictions the way they are in England, you do wonders



Top picture on opposite page shows part of the foyer. Second picture: a member of the sound department tries out the effects in the hall. Above: the attractive proscenium made and erected by members; Hugh Baddeley, popular Chairman of the Planet Film Society, introduces the programme. (Photographs by D. Colyer-Harrison).

cramming so much into it. Newsprint restrictions have hit us again in Australia, and the Brisbane dailies are now down to eight and ten pages—still slightly larger than the London papers! Incidentally, cine equipment is harder to come by in Australia than Kangaroo feathers—and they're non-existent! I have to smile when I see complaints about lack of equipment in England in letters to *A.C.W.* and then read all those lovely advertisements about the magnificent range of material there is available over there. CHAS. B. STEELE. MOUNT GRAVATT, STH. BRISBANE.



Detail of a shot from "Bobby, Our Robin". The other illustrations on this and the following two pages are frame enlargements from the film.

It is a mistake to suppose that, in a film on bird life, the general audience wants to see some bird they have never seen at all, and never will see, in real life—some rare bird on an almost inaccessible island which can only be visited by an "expedition" involving some risk to life and much greater risk to apparatus. An exciting film might result, but for the audience the main draw would be the adventure, not the bird.

To stimulate an interest in bird life it is much preferable to start at a point within the knowledge of most of the audience, and to take them farther into that line of country—to see what they themselves can observe in the limits of their ordinary life—something which, otherwise, they might miss.

Bobby, Our Robin is just such a film and made for just that purpose. It is built up on the habits of the most friendly of our birds—possibly the only one whose interest in us does not spring entirely from what it gets out of us. Although dealing with the robin only, much of it, e.g., recognition of mate when she "gets off" with him, is true for a wide range of birds. So it is a film with a purpose, and what better reason could there be for making it?

Autumn is the time of year when robins stake out their claims to separate territories; that is, they divide up the gardens, one or two to each robin. Disputes are settled by intimidating tactics including song, and by

ROBIN AS FILM STAR

THE MAKING OF ONE OF THE A.C.W.
TEN BEST FILMS OF 1950

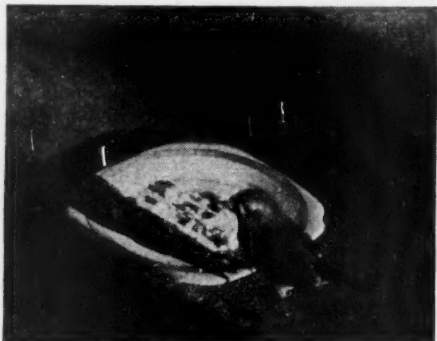
By JOHN CHEAR, F.R.P.S.

display of the red breast, and, if necessary, by fighting. Then the undisputed occupant "calls upon" his host and shows his or her capacity for friendliness.

At any rate, autumn was the obvious starting point. But autumn as the key to the opening of a colour film must not be stressed too strongly. A prolonged blaze of autumn foliage might be like the unduly protracted and flowery remarks of a chairman who leaves no time for the speaker of the evening.

So down to business. Bobby asserts his rights by taking his place as observer of the autumn operations in the garden and introduces himself by posing and display and (in spite of the silence of the film) obvious singing. The audience assumes the role of Bobby's host and retains that character throughout.

On to the garden. The french window of the lounge opened. Bobby spots the handle as a wonderful vantage point for attracting the attention of his hosts and observing their movements within. So the story goes on with the invasion of the house itself. Winter comes—with snow—and naturally, Bobby does not fail to get his votive offerings.





With early spring (and a typically English late snow), a complication appears in the shape of a mate. Her ingratiating behaviour, fortunately displayed just on the window-sill, forms one of the high spots of the film. It records a little-understood phase of bird life which happens under our eyes but is so often missed. That is one great advantage of a film record; the bird may not repeat it but we can. This may have been the first time Bobby saw her, but he did not drive her away. Why? The answer lies in the film.

In spite of the shyness of the hen, Bobby is marked down for a very industrious nesting season, the vicissitudes of which are followed, with some diversions into the kind of expedients to which other robins are driven in their search for nesting holes—pots, cans, haversacks, etc.

Bobby's Greatest Achievement

No troubles for Mrs. Bobby; she found a broken window in a shed, went inside and nested there—at least for her first brood. And now came Bobby's greatest achievement. Being held responsible by his mate for feeding her as she sat on the second nest, and also for the first brood, still in the garden and unable to fly properly, he took food from his host's hand. Necessity has been said to make cowards of us all, but it made Bobby bold! Success crowns his efforts and autumn comes round again and sees the youngsters get their red breasts (the first feathers are not red but speckled).

A year of a robin's life is a very large slice—the average life from August in the year of hatching is barely two years. He could live longer but is subject to a high accident rate. So the film may be said to cover half of Bobby's life. In plain fact, it did—a cat saw to that.

The film was essentially a one man effort; I was producer, director, camera man, editor and naturalist. The last aspect has already been dealt with; but let me say that I



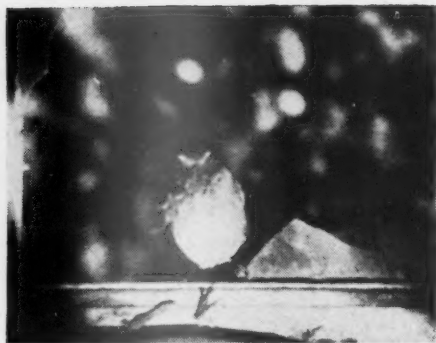
believe the lone worker should stick to the subject he really knows. For the direction, facilities were very readily granted by the lady at whose house Bobby made himself at home. She kept close watch on all his doings; he had a passion for cheese and I am sure she sacrificed her whole ration for him. It was surprising, too, how often a critical stage in the filming, or the only day when weather conditions were suitable for it, occurred on a washing day. She never complained, and cheerfully accommodated herself to Bobby's ways, and mine.

Planning the Film

As to detailed script, it will be obvious that in such a case only a general plan can be laid down beforehand; but that does not mean merely waiting for something to turn up! For long I had planned to make a film of a robin which would, at one and the same time typify the essential phases in the life of the bird and exhibit his special friendliness to man. It was a case of "Wanted: an exceptionally friendly robin".

When Bobby turned up, I worked out a plan for 400 feet covering the normal phases of a robin's life, with plenty of room for the friendly episodes and suitable scenic shots of a seasonal nature—these last, in fact, were taken before the rest of the film. The details had to be filled in by Bobby himself and he was a very good performer. Of course for the most part he did not need any tuition, he was acting on instinct—and the cheese did the rest! Even so, there were one or two essential shots that I never succeeded in obtaining from Bobby—feeding the youngsters in the garden was one of them, for he would take them in such dark corners. I had to resort to other youngsters.

There must be a crisis in every story, and this I could not plan. I just had to be on the look-out for one and seize it when it came. Bobby's method of triumphing over the difficulty of feeding his mate and the



first family at the same time, provided this.

Now for the camera work; in a bird film this is a matter of very considerable technical skill and needs a lot of practice. A colour film taken partly indoors and partly out of doors presents matching difficulties, especially if the indoor shots are taken on artificial light stock when daylight is coming in.

As far as possible this stock was avoided and use was made of a trail of sunlight through the window. It was possible to do, this because at no time was it necessary to include a view of the whole room or anything like it. One of the essentials of bird work is that the bird must be of appreciable size on the screen, so that one cannot very well include much background. Such 'distant' shots as there are in the film (the term is, of course, purely relative), were taken out of doors; indoor shots were confined to narrow angle, close range work. This avoided both the matching difficulty and the excessive contrast of a small shaft of light in a large shadow.

Once only was a general shot necessary indoors, and that was in the shed containing the nest. Here I used photofloods, and the subsequent close-ups in that sequence were similarly lit and artificial light stock used—again to obviate matching difficulties.

As to hides, Bobby himself did not need any when telephoto lenses were used (and probably even when they weren't) but his mate was a different case. For her I had to use a hide of some sort—generally just a green sheet over myself and camera (on tripod). Such a procedure involves deciding beforehand on the exact focus and angle because the bird at once detects any movement under the sheet. All I could do was to press the button. Luckily, the shots of her were usually at the nest where the limits of position were clearly defined. To follow Bobby in his peregrinations over the floor by such a method would have been impossible.

Tripod an Essential

I mentioned a tripod. It is an absolute necessity all the time and every time. The only movement seen by the audience should be that of the bird or, in rare cases, a panning movement following the bird. Another reason for its use is the telephoto lens. On a camera with a focal length of 1 in., I used a battery of 2½ in., 4 in. and 6 in. lenses as occasion demanded, the first two having an aperture of f/2.7 and the last f/4.5. At such apertures very accurate focusing is necessary—no easy matter with such a subject.

How to get that crisp focus which is the requisite of all bird pictures and yet use long focus lenses? I found the answer in the Kodak Cine Special with its focusing prism on the gate. Even so, the bird must keep within a shallow band of distances from the camera, or the run must be stopped and the camera re-focused. But frequent stops produce jerky sequences and the audience might complain that just when they were watching what the bird would do next, the film shifted to something else.

Making a bird film, even with so apt a performer as Bobby, is no easy job and is never straightforward. It is a grand exercise in overcoming difficulties quickly, in seizing opportunities and improvising.

ALARM

and DESPONDENCY

By

JULIEN CAUNTER

For a start I am going to tackle the ticklish subject of scripting and talk about it as if I were in favour of it. But *can* one give useful advice to anyone not naturally addicted to scripts? Yes, I think so.

We both know how futile it would be for me to say that you ought to write a script—just like that. It is also of no use putting a ready-made script into your hands. So we will view the problem in another way. Consider! A cine magazine can contain only three kinds of sequence: those that need a script, those that can do without a script, and those that cannot be scripted. *Thus*, if a proper application of these graduated items does not suggest a method leading to improvements in technique and more attractive sequences, then I will eat my footage counter. And notice that the sequences that demand a script are in a minority.

If we were planning a Ten Best film this attitude would not do at all. We should have to settle down to a real nightmare of a scribbling session, with tongues hanging out. Maybe we will go into that more next year, or the year after. But not this year.

Nothing Literary

Now is the time for me to define hastily what I mean by *Script*, bearing in mind your reluctance to be introduced. At its worst, a script is a most complex document on which a great deal of time and skill have been spent. It is probably of foolscap size and about this thick, with thumbnail sketches and lots of medium shots of this and close shots of that and impossible shots of the other.

Obviously this type of script is useless to us. Our script is best described as a small piece of paper with hardly anything written on it because all we need is a few notes to guide us—and then only on our most difficult sequences. I do not mean to suggest that those well-written literary forays we see around us are not excellent. To the more forward amateurs they can be of great service and will undoubtedly produce admirable films if they are followed. We will forget them solely because at this stage

they are beyond us. We must, like the acrobat, learn to tumble before we can perform.

We will not make our sequences too involved—nothing too ingenious—just good, honest workmanship. It is so easy to make a plan too complicated. It is an odd thing, but as soon as people sit down to write a script their ideas leap forward in a shockingly impractical way and they put down on paper things that are right beyond their capabilities. And they do not seem able to realise it. Professionals are almost as guilty—I know, because I have done it myself.

Just A Simple Plan

Practical we must be. And for those not yet expert, a simple plan is *the most* that is required. I refuse to encourage unmanageable schemes. But our simplicity must be *good* simplicity—none of the old nonsense! At this stage, however, let us assume that you have abandoned your script before you have really got going with it. How do we go on? First I want to dispel the idea that our sequences must tell a deliberate story: that is, a strip of action with a beginning, a middle, and a climax for the end. I repeat, none of that.

The only principles I shall press are that whenever we put the family on the screen, as is unavoidable (and even desirable, in spite of what the art boys say), we shall make sure they are *doing* something; and that in all sequences we shall contrive to cover up poor continuity or jumps in the flow of action. For example, we want to avoid showing suddenly three people where a split second before there were only two of them.

In every sequence try to do something new—it does not matter how simple. *Simple*, mark you, not *clever*. Try to be clever and you invite disaster. Content yourself with attempting one thing you have not done before, even if it is only a fade in or a fade out done in the camera, or a close up. Try something and do not grieve if it turns out to be a failure. You will not, of course, succeed every time but if you can get only *one* bright idea into a film it will be an excellent start. Keep it up, and your technique will improve alarmingly!



What is to be the average length of the items in our cine magazine? Taking 300 feet as our reel length, we can regard six main subjects as a minimum number, thus arriving at 50 feet as the maximum length of a sequence. Some may be only 25 feet, and others will quite reasonably be only a few shots, or even one shot if the linking titles are good enough.

It is not considered good practice to have "one shot—one title" but we can get away with it more than once in a variety reel. I remember seeing a 300 ft. film that had a title for every shot; some of the references were very funny but it was too laboured when the scheme went on and on past the first 50 feet.

Wastage

Notice that I mentioned lengths of 25 and 50 feet. If you are shooting on 9.5mm. stock this allows for a wastage of a few feet in every 30. I can see hands raised in horror. What? Cut out precious film? And with stock the price it is? (As if I didn't know!) Well, if you are determined not to lose any footage then there is nothing to make you. But I hope I can talk you out of being so tight: in doing so I shall be preparing the ground for the Improvement Stage that comes later (in other words, Editing).

I am remembering all the time that we are not designing a film for the Ten Best taskmasters, so we still have a great deal of liberty to do as we like. I only want to badger you good naturedly into doing more to your films than you might otherwise have done, not only so that others will get more enjoyment out of your handiwork but so that you will feel prouder of it. At an opportune moment we will return to this matter of "throwing away good film". Let us in the meantime press on!

We have some idea of subject lengths. What about the subject matter? What kind of things do we expect to shoot? As to that, there is no limit—whatever comes along that takes our fancy. There are plenty of old favourites; and it does not matter if scenes have been shot a thousand times by other enthusiasts, they are always

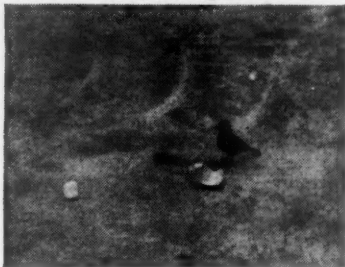
For the bird watching sequence it is easy to film the children at a window. Remember to persuade them to look at a point a couple of feet away from the camera—not at it. If the season is past when hordes of hungry birds swarm all over the shed roof, it is almost as much fun to show only one bird (and make the sequence a little shorter).

new enough for us. At random we can mention:

The children or the baby in the garden. A day in London. Harvesting. A picnic. A local place of interest. A procession.

Some of these items may be considered too big. More trivial subjects are quite in order. Nothing need be too ordinary. Examples?

A snowman. Cricket in the backyard. Birds on the shed roof. A frog in the garden.



All these suggestions are opportunities for showing off members of The Family. Isn't that all the incentive many of us need? It's probably the reason why we bought our camera in the first place. But 'birds on the shed roof', for example . . . what's that to do with the family?

This is the situation: from the bathroom window you can look down on the shed roof and watch the birds that scramble for crumbs and other titbits thrown there. We photograph our birds *and also* the children watching them and being amused. That makes a delightful cameo, I claim.

Such a sequence may not seem to have much attraction *before* you shoot it. But go ahead and get it on celluloid, and once the deed is done you will find a lot of interest taken in it. As a scheme on paper it is only a theory, but put it in front of people ready to look at it and it becomes of value. And it increases in value every year.

The 'birds on shed roof' cameo does not require a script. Yet it is no scrappy, slung-together nonentity. All you do is to use patience in getting some good action shots of the birds squabbling among themselves for food, and on some other occasion shoot enough scenes of the children's delight as they watch from the window. Then when these are joined together alternately we have our finished sequence. It is so simple.

Next month we shall first clear up a few points of practical camera operating, and then—to work! (Did I say *work*?)

They Do These Things Well in France

By SOUND TRACK



The cipher of the Cine Club des Flandres, used on proscenium and stationery.

When I found I had to visit the International Textile Exhibition at Lille, Northern France, last month, I asked U.N.I.C.A. for a local contact: with results so pleasant that I advise anyone visiting the Continent to do the same.

Friday evening is the regular meeting time of the Cine Club des Flandres, but this was a Tuesday, so only a few special enthusiasts would be there, I was told. As I entered, they played our National Anthem, a nice touch. They have a really spacious projection room with adjoining cutting room, giving to a hall seating one hundred, with bags of room at the front, a recess behind the stage, and—lucky people—a clear 18 feet to the ceiling. I expect we have all worked with inadequate headroom and wondered where on earth to put our top lights. Their proscenium is dignified, the only embellishment being their cipher at the top, arranged to look like a cine camera on a tripod.

The usual cinematic atmosphere was strangely superimposed on the essentially French approach to film-making, the subject matter, in particular the human aspects, receiving far more attention than is common to us, with our colder approach. The first of the films shown was a brilliantly executed impression of a sculptor's nightmare, meticulously accompanied by Richard Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration", and containing a brilliant montage of sinister masks. Then came a slightly sinister comedy of a man nervously waiting in the presence of a dispassionate clerk, whose rhythmic rubber-stamping causes his tortured imagination to place him in the hands of the Inquisition, imagining Poe's "Pit and the Pendulum" . . . the shadow of the pendulum swings down ever nearer, he almost collapses—then is rudely

awakened and ushered into the presence of . . . the tax collector.

Next, a profoundly symbolic film (*Le Cadavre Opportun*) all told in symbolic close-ups, of a writer chained to his work, barred from escape. A fine trio of recent productions from one club! I took along a film which was politely received, after which by my request we saw some excellent Kodachrome of Venice and a rough-cut part of an unfinished film of fine quality, shot on the Pathe Webó Special with Gevaert Ultra Pan. Two remarkable shots were of those minute singing birds the French so greatly admire, shot at eight inches from the camera, and beautifully focused and lit. There was also a difficult mirror shot, another case where the reflex finder is an asset.

The projection was impeccable, music excellently reproduced (they use fibre needles), and the tip-up chairs very comfortable. These chairs were in sets of six and could easily be moved when the floor is needed for filming. They keep their records on a series of special shelves, labelled *waltzes*, *polkas*, etc.

Did I mention that there was a bar? At midnight precisely we drank champagne: a practised hand caused a cork to shoot across the auditorium. Desultory talk on filming sessions . . . I was involved in a slight "Paillard" versus "Webó" controversy . . . glasses were re-filled—"C'est obligatoire" . . . I left with regret, hoping that our societies will do any casual foreign visitor equally proud. The Festival and the U.N.I.C.A. Congress in London and Glasgow in August will lure some over, and they see the names of our societies in A.C.W.

GETTING ABOVE THE CROWD

Assisted unexpectedly by an afternoon free from rain, I did a little bit of newsreel work last week—mostly street scenes, in which the everlasting problem is to get a camera position higher than the heads of the crowds. Readers who have given up the struggle and taken home those fearful shots of the backs of people's necks, with the top of the procession intermittently visible above them, may like to know of three methods I successfully employed . . .

- (1) (rather lucky) filming from the porch of a church, two steps above street level.
- (2) Using the tripod as a unipod, and filming standing on the standard wooden (wide-seated!) armchair borrowed from a nearby police station.
- (3) Standing, and held balanced by a stranger hastily called upon to help, on a narrow-topped wall, braced against the cast iron railings surmounting same.

★ ★ ★

ABOUT P.E. EXPOSURE METERS

Experienced readers, please skip this! I want to save beginners some worry. It's about photo-electric exposure meters. There are three things about them that you are not often told, but they're dashed useful knowledge. If they are new to only 10% of readers, they are worth the space of re-telling.

(1) CALIBRATION

Unless yours is a brand new meter with up-to-date tables of film speed settings, it is worth comparing the reading it gives against another meter, which you can borrow from a friend, a cine club acquaintance, or a dealer. The job only takes two minutes. You place the two meters side by side, both looking at the same scene, and check that they agree. If they do not, make a second similar test before applying the necessary correction, if any, to your meter.

(2) SETTING

Do remember that individual requirements vary. For example, the man with the 100 watt 8mm. projector must have a thinner image than the man with a 500 watt 16mm. machine. In the case of Kodachrome, the latter can use a more fully colour-saturated

I have always found that most people positively enjoy being pressed into service. It gives them something useful to do. I once had a symmetrical set-up outside a church entrance, the camera being on the edge of the pavement at the opposite side of the road. Numerous kids kept playing perilously near, and occasionally touching the tripod legs, thus inviting disaster. Moreover, they were eating some frightful sweets on sticks which, when discarded, had a lethal effect on one's balance.

I was able to avert the threatened unparallelled catastrophe by getting two adjacent men to stand cover over the side legs of the tripod, while my position safeguarded the rear leg. And that, incidentally, reminds me that the safest tripod set-up is with the hind leg between the legs of the cameraman, a leg sticking out in front being very bad tactics in shooting street scenes. I hope I have saved you from finding this out the hard way!

picture. The meter cannot possibly be expected to know which you require. Therefore *some trial* is essential before you can accept the setting quoted in the instructions. Broadly, the low-powered projector man will want to give up to half-a-stop more exposure than the meter reads, the over-powered man the same amount less.

(3) INTERPRETATION

For any typical outdoor scene—the meter reading varies considerably according to the angle at which the meter is held. If you tilt it gradually upwards, you will note a marked increase in pointer movement as the amount of sky included becomes appreciable. Just about this point is generally the correct reading position: but what *vital matters* is that you are *consistent* in aiming your meter.

I advise getting the knack of correctly aiming the meter by taking numerous practice readings on similar scenes in different surroundings; as soon as you have the knack of getting consistent readings under such conditions, the standard for which is to be found in the *A.C.W.* exposure tables on p. 150 of the June *A.C.W.*, you will handle your meter with greatly enhanced assurance.

Assiduous practice of these three points pays handsome dividends.

LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES!

By LESLIE WOOD

Movies are losing their mobility. In a search for new themes with which to attract the people who are not usually picture-goers, producers are putting on the screen subjects borrowed from other fields of entertainment. The success of *The Red Shoes*, which brought ballet to towns which rarely saw first-class ballet, started the present trend. Now *The Tales of Hoffmann* brings opera to the Orkneys and *The Great Caruso* great singing to the Shetlands.

Because the professional screen deviates from the usual motion picture norm, so do amateurs now, regrettably, tend to follow suit. They forget all about the necessity for speed in cutting and, though their pictures do not speak, sing, or dance, use the slower, semi-static cutting of the current professional screen on their silent subjects.

During the past few weeks I have seen many amateur films. In nearly all the photography is good, acting passable, the titling excellent, but inspired cutting practically non-existent. I attribute this to the influence of the modern sound film on a generation which probably never saw silent pictures at their zenith, when the average length of all shots was barely seven seconds, not seventeen or seventy!

There is, admittedly, a counter argument for speed in cutting. It is this: if the picture puts over its story, what does it matter if the camera set-ups last, not seconds, but minutes? The answer is that a film is not a stage play. Its tempo and its varied viewpoints are part and parcel of cinema entertainment. A film is picture writing. Every close up,

every flash, and every long shot is part of a rhythm just as the metre is the essential ingredient in a poem. "Hiawatha" has a lilt which is quite different in its effect on our minds and emotions from Keats's "Ode to Autumn". So the rhythm in the cutting of a film can also evoke just as wide a diversity of response in the minds and emotions of a motion picture audience.

Amateur film makers, by and large, are now lazy cutters. Some of them are too indolent to photograph scenes from a diversity of angles that would permit inter-cutting. Many of their subjects could be recorded equally well by a still camera.

Holidays are now on us and so are holiday films. I am very much afraid that a lot of them will consist merely of pretty views. Greatly daring, a bit of panning may be introduced, principally



While Hoffman finishes the story of his three loves, his present love, Stella (Moir Shearer)—"Three women blended as one"—is dancing in the nearby Opera House with the Poet (Edmond Audran) who mirrors Hoffman's destiny.

because the one selected viewpoint will not embrace everything unless the camera is moved. That sort of thing is not making movies but making murals. The movie camera is a mobile thing designed to supply a movie projector, not feed a magic lantern.

For lovers of opera and ballet, *The Tales of Hoffmann* is a masterpiece of fine singing and great dancing and there is a feast of bright and dazzling colours. Its highly talented stars are Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann, Leonide Massine and The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the leadership of Sir Thomas Beecham.

It was 'written, produced and directed' by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger (Offenbach's name is not included on the posters), and they introduce several ingredients which can only be achieved in a studio. In one scene a great cloth covers the floor. It is painted like a flight of steps. The camera goes aloft and shoots a player running with twinkling feet down the non-existent steps. No theatre, obviously, can take its audience up into the regions immediately above the stage.

Again, there is a scene in which a puppet master affixes his puppets to the control and lowers them to a toy stage to perform. The next shot is of live actors dressed in replicas of the puppets' clothes. The effect is to make the puppets come suddenly to life. Two or three such novelties, however, cannot

transform a theatre piece into cinema as envisaged by Pudovkin, Griffith, and other masters of the movie craft.

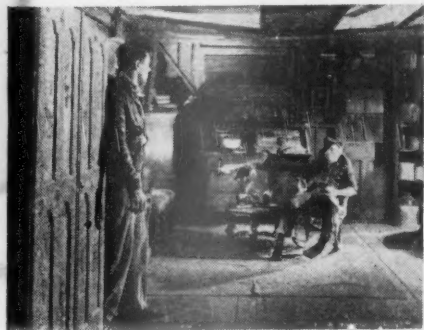
In *The Tales of Hoffman* the screen is a backdrop for fantasy and make-believe. Time has no meaning. And many of the sets are simply yards of gauze with changing coloured lights playing on them. The ballet dancers have been dubbed with magnificent voices. It is all larger than life and twice as unnatural, and its link with the stage is so close that the opera is even divided up into separate acts, there is an interval, and the orchestra actually tunes up on the sound track while the credits are being shown!

Another example of the current practice of bringing other styles of entertainment into the cinema is *The Great Caruso*, co-starring Mario Lanza, a great singing discovery, and Ann Blyth. It is singing, singing all the way—excerpts from "La Tosca", "La Boheme", "Rigoletto", "Il Trovatore", "Cavalleria Rusticana", and "Because", "Ave Maria" and lots more.

Based on Caruso's biography as written by his widow, it is a mild story of a poor boy who becomes a great tenor, never becomes swollen headed and whose only problems are those of trying to woo richer men's daughters against considerable opposition. For a lesson in swift cutting the amateur would have to look elsewhere.

In the early days of the sound film it was predicted that dialogue would hinder the development of the movie as movie. For a time, producers hired

John Ireland seen in two shots from "The Scarf". He is in the foreground in the scene on the left, which exemplifies the virtue of the Garutso lens used to give sharp over-all focus.

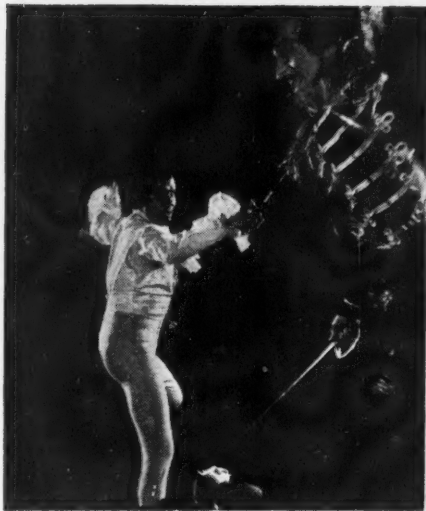


only stage stars, because of their diction, bought up plays, because they had ready-made dialogue, and photographed them as they were presented on the stage.

They were handicapped by their newly-acquired sound apparatus. Re-recording was in its infancy. Rather than take risks in synchronising sound track or disc, they took the line of least resistance, and once a camera started on a scene, let it run as long as possible. The seven-second take was dead. Then things were speeded up a little. Close-ups found their way back as isolated phenomena. To-day, the need to cut overheads is forcing producers back to the early talkie technique of the 'ten-minute take'.

Two current examples are *Born Yesterday* and *The Scarf*. Of course, neither has a ten-minute take—it only seems like it. The former, from a stage play, is a very entertaining picture in places—the original stage play sections. It tells how a self-made industrialist, practically a hoodlum himself, employs a journalist to give his girl friend culture. The said 'moll' is so dumb and endowed with such an accent that, when she is not screaming like a siren, she sounds for all the world like a budgerigar with tonsillitis.

This performance won the Academy Award for Judy Holliday, and it is very, very funny. But despite Broderick Crawford as the mentor who wants class in his girl as well as curves, the film could not, to paraphrase a popular catch phrase, 'move less', despite the introduction of a few exteriors to try to disguise the stage play origin.



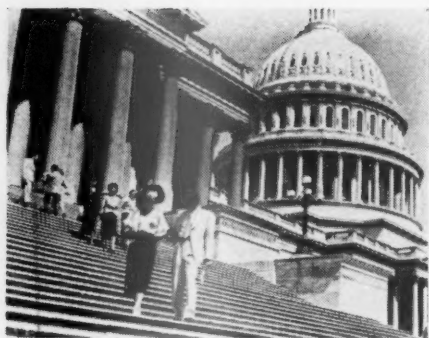
Hoffman (in white) kills his rival in a duel. The film stars Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann and Leonide Massine. The music is provided by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, directed by Sir Thomas Beecham.

The Scarf does not derive from the theatre. This story of a man who escapes from a criminal lunatic asylum and who tries to find out whether or not he actually committed murder, resolves itself, after the initial outburst of action depicting the man's escape, into lengthy conversations.

Taking shelter in an old homesteader's shack, we are treated for nearly a reel by the bewhiskered owner to a dissertation on man's folly and the sorrows of the world. We listen but we fail to see.

Incidentally, *The Scarf*, which stars John Ireland, Mercedes McCambridge—as a waitress with a philosophy—and Emlyn Williams as a psychiatrist who is actually insane, was shot with the new Garutso Balanced Lens, the doughnut-type lens which, it is claimed, is compensated so that it gives infinity of focus from foreground to background. Perhaps the extremely low key photography in the film is not a fair test for it, for its only notable attribute in this case

The puppet maker destroys his creation, the doll Olympia, and Hoffman (Robert Rounseville) finds only her head and pieces of stuffing and wire that were her limbs.



Two tourists—Judy Holliday and William Holden—see the sights of Washington, D.C., in "Born Yesterday."

is that it picks out the weave of fabrics with almost microscopic fidelity.

Here we have four pictures which are all entertaining in varying degrees, but which seem almost deliberately to be applying the semi-static nature of television production to the cinema. Television is not nearly so fluid as films. Basically acted on a stage, it has to use interpolated snippets of film, usually silent, to maintain continuity. If the cinema wants to maintain its supremacy it must play its strongest cards: mobility and fluidity. It must not present lengthy stage scenes, operatic arias and ballet, and link each 'number' up with a few exteriors or transition shots.

Think what a movie camera can do if used imaginatively! It can change scene completely every few seconds; it can indicate the passage of events by a quick-fire succession of flashes and dissolves (usually mis-called a montage), it can magnify the smallest object or compress a vast area into a 16mm. frame. It can show the tear drop trembling on the heroine's eyelashes or depict ten thousand people fleeing to escape an

earthquake. In gifted hands it can tell its story without words, even without sub-titles. It can utilise model shots and trick effects which are peculiar to itself.

Anyone who loses sight of these everyday potentialities and is content to allow footage to run on pretty postcard views or Aunt Veronica playing her harp simply has not a glimmer of the potentialities of the cinema. "Let's Go to the Pictures" is the slogan of the cinema industry. It's a good one. By all means let us go to the pictures, but, when we get there, please let us insist on pictures which *are* pictures. We want to be exhilarated and excited by the constant revelations of a camera which continually probes.

The masters of the silent screen used to cut their films not by the foot but down to the very frame on occasion: 'Miranda raises the gun—seven frames; Molly recoiling in horror—six frames; police car drawing in at a kerb—five frames', and so on. It was all part of the design. One or two redundant frames either way could spoil the impact. Producers were out to make your pulse gallop, to bring you to the edge of your seat with excitement. They were dispensing tonics, not sleeping draughts.

Yes, let's go to the pictures, but I do wish we could go more often to the *movies*. Amateurs who are so minded can now score a 'beat' over the commercial cinema; they can show the public that a film cut with swiftness, economy and force transcends photographed plays and operas because the very nature of rapid-fire alternations of long shot, mid-shot, close-up, long-shot, two-shot, flash, insert, long shot, fade out, can be a tremendously entertaining thing in itself, quite apart from the story it has to tell.

Short Lengths

The responsibility for operating the insurance scheme inaugurated two years ago by the Film Exhibitors' Guild has been transferred to Film and Cinema Insurances, 17 Hobart Road, Worcester Park, Surrey. Originally the insurance certificates issued against a master policy effected with Lloyds underwriters were available to Guild members only, but under the new arrangement, cover can be given to all 16mm. users, amateur and commercial. It is possible to ensure against all risks to equipment and films. The terms are the same for individuals and clubs as for commercial exhibitors.

The Scientific Film Association (4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1) has issued a list of about

50) distributors and owners of scientific films, with film titles and a brief indication of their availability. A number of the films are 16mm. silent and can be had on free loan. It should be noted that the term 'scientific' is very broadly interpreted. For example, among the distributors listed are the Danish Embassy (documentary films) and the Travel Association. The list costs 10s., but could probably be inspected at large public libraries. A later list, Films for Training in Industry, costs 5s.

In view of the fact that they plan to release a number of feature films in colour, Wignmore Films, Ltd., are arranging to have trailers made for them—also in colour.

LOAD YOUR OWN CASSETTES

Surprising—and welcome—new development
and notable new trends seen at Cologne
Photo and Cine Fair.

By NORMAN JENKINS

Owners of Siemens cameras will rejoice that at last there is news of developments likely to enable them to make full use of their cameras again. At the Photokina exhibition recently held in Cologne, Siemens were showing a full range of cine equipment in most respects identical with that available at the outbreak of war—including the 8mm. camera of which few, if any, examples ever found their way over here.

But the star attraction for us is that they are now actively encouraging users of their 16mm. cine cameras to load their own cassettes. That they should take this step is probably due in part to the difficulty of co-operating with film manufacturers and, I should like to think, also to the acceptance at long last of the fact that many cine amateurs are capable technicians as well able to load film into cassettes as the girls employed on this job in the average factory.

Robust Mechanism

The Siemens cassette was one of the most successful of its kind: robust, free from the troubles that beset the majority of cassette-loaded cameras and most unlikely to need the tool room check alleged to be required at each loading by other makes. The diagram reproduced on page 267 shows the inside of the pamphlet now being issued. The information is a little thin on the ground and might be amplified in one or two particulars, but it is nonetheless very welcome.

For the U.K. reader this development may well be sensational, but internationally the real news of the show has more than one significance. The well known firm of E. Leitz, makers of the justly famed Leica and much important microscope and industrial equipment, have at last entered the 16mm. field. After nearly forty years of camera manufacture (the first Leica was born around the year 1913), which have

seen the passing of almost the whole of the experimental and development phases of cinematography, both 16mm. and 35mm., it is of very considerable significance that this firm should open up a completely new field.

The way in which this entry has been made is also of significance. They have chosen to do so by producing a projector. This is no mere amateur one-hand-carry-about job, but a 16mm. projector built to carry through a serious programme, only a degree removed from the performance of portable 35mm. equipment.

Sprocket Intermittent

I am sorry to say that the information I was able to wrest from the German-only speaking representative at the exhibition is somewhat meagre, but though I was not able to get the complete story down to the last nut and bolt, I did get the salient facts. The whole equipment, including the optical system and the amplifier and power supply unit, is believed to be made by Leitz. The amplifier is a 25 watt one.

The rest of the specification reads this way: 1,200 metres film spools (3,900 ft.); sprocket intermittent; 20v. 20 amp—400 watt lamp; mirror equal in diameter to the height of the lamp; reflection optical system for slide projector (from film lamp); special and somewhat novel tensioning system for variation in take-up speed; separate exciter lamp for what is understood to be projected slit system; tubular steel open frame type stand.

You will see from the photograph the lens of the still system directly in line with the movie one, but apparently projecting outwards further—and just below the knob which screws the upper arm on to the body. The tensioning device can be seen between the spokes of the take-up spool—at about ten o'clock.

Can Be Used As Table Model

Whether it was the original intention to make this a table model is not clear, but it can be so used, the rear feet for this purpose being visible (without support) at the left hand end of the base. There are at least ten variable controls, three switches and two meters.

The choice of a sprocket intermittent will have all the pundits on their feet in horror—unless they now recognise the essential rightness of it. The Leitz sprocket is relieved into almost skeleton form, rather

like those employed by Philips of Eindhoven in their 35mm. designs. The exact nature of the maltese cross that drives the sprocket it was not possible to discover. It may be that they have used a straightforward eight segment cross, but the picture on the side of the lamphouse is most intriguing. Possibly it is no more than a publicity man's idea of a good name plate; it has the look of an eight-segment cross for the upper half suddenly breaking off—or continuing on, it's very confusing—into a three segment negative-form cam.

The upper half has a normal three segment lock and strike form while the right and left continuation has only half a segment apiece. We have had geared sprockets from a normal four segment cross in the Martin projector, and a new form of eight-picture intermittent sprocket from Mr. Wilson who designed the new S. G. Brown projector, but what this is must remain a mystery until I get more of the promised information from Wetzlar.

Three in One Show

The new Leitz Projector is known as the G.1. The 'G' may stand for 'Giant', or not, but it is noticeable that the handles on the main case (there are three cases) are very strong with reinforcement running down to the base. Leitz are not, of course, alone in their determination to use a sprocket intermittent. There are the examples quoted above, there are many more of which we have known for years, and at the Photokina exhibition there were at least two more. But three in one show such as this has considerable significance.

The other contributors to this trend were the well-known firm of Bauer who showed their 16mm. projector in both incandescent lamp and arc lamp form, the latter being a most compact machine. Bauer also exhibited a 16mm. claw design in sound and silent versions.

Gearing to Eight-Picture Sprocket

The Bauer sprocket design is based on a four-picture intermittent with gearing to an eight-picture sprocket. The other sprocket intermittent 16mm. projector looked very much like a prototype. It was shown in an isolated position with no demonstrators and merely a name plate—Walter Knetsch. Complete with arc lamp this projector looked somewhat like the Bauer, but without its compactness.

This projector stood in front of a gigantic loudspeaker which pushed out canned music and announcements all day long with tremendous volume and some small degree of quality, but since the sponsors did not see fit to repeat the constant announcements except in far too swift German, the significance of the demonstration was lost.

Multiple Speaker Units

Not so certain other developments in loudspeakers. In the grounds there stood a pillar-like kiosk which housed a large number of small cone type speakers. The outdoor volume was tremendous and the quality extraordinarily good. Very free from the usual tinniness of horn speakers pushed to their limit, this multiple unit indeed struck a new note. Inside the cine section more than one exhibit gave evidence of this trend towards numerous speaker units. In one bank I counted no fewer than forty-eight.

A visitor better-informed than myself on continental developments acknowledged the success of the multiple unit scheme and suggested that there was probably no dividing network supplying sections with high and low frequencies to be dealt with separately. I think he was right, for there would not seem much point in splitting the supply to identical speakers.

There was quite a large crowd round the stand of Arnold and Richter, the makers of the Arri processing equipment, printers and the reflex cine camera for 35mm. that Robert Flaherty used so successfully in *Louisiana Story*. The same reflex principle has now been adopted for a 16mm. cine camera. For a camera that offers so much it is remarkably small and compact.

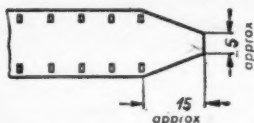
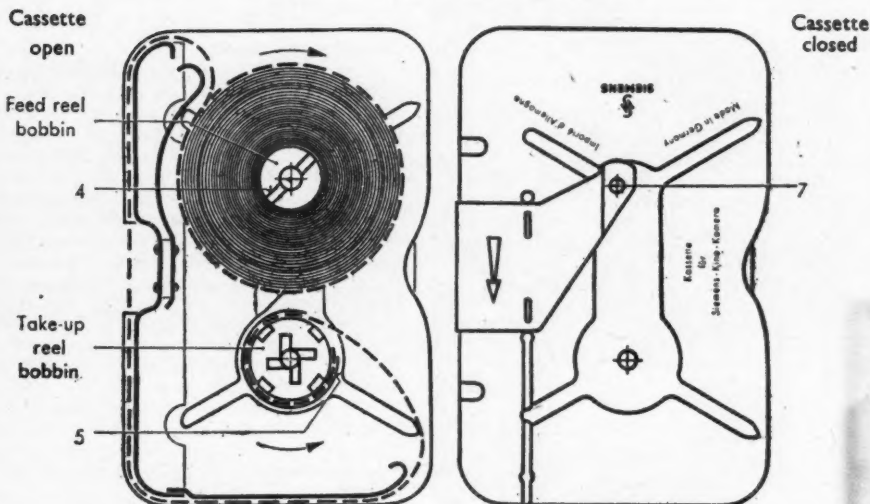
Single Lens Reflex Principle

The principle is worth a moment's thought. The camera works similarly to a single lens reflex still camera. The viewfinder is alongside the main optical axis but takes its picture from the same lens as the picture optical system by means of a mirror fronted shutter—reflecting the same picture as that registered in the film gate. Since this has the same focus and axial characteristics, the need for separate rangefinders, sliding base or optical focuser and rotating turret disappears. There is, of course, a turret for three lenses, but its only function is to provide swift change-over.

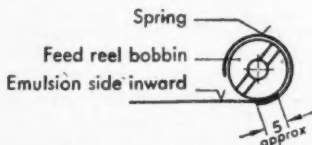
Footage and frame counters are incorporated. Outside spool spindle knobs assist in loading. At the moment there is no back

HOW TO LOAD THE SIEMENS CASSETTE

in Cameras A, B, C, C2, F, F2 and D



1. Taper the leader of the film as shown.



2. Place the tapered leader approx. 5mm. under the spring of the bobbin, emulsion side inward.

3. Wind film up tightly and flatten roll on both sides evenly by tapping it on a table.

4. Place the wound film in the cassette so that the locking pins of the feed reel bobbin point toward the top.

5. Lead the film through the magazine channel as shown in drawing and fasten it to the bobbin of the take-up reel. The leader of the film should be placed as far as possible under the spring of the bobbin, and both parts, the film and spring, should be pressed down.

6. Close cassette and press locking button into the catch. Shake the closed magazine moderately in horizontal direction to facilitate this operation.

7. Push the slide on to the locking button and again test whether or not the locking pin is pressed down.

Note: Load panchromatic films in green light, colour films in complete darkness.

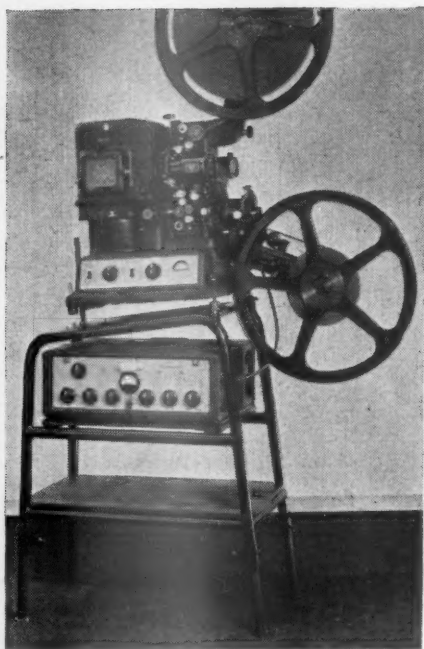
wind, but the electric motor at present fitted will soon be provided with reverse for this purpose. There is a peculiar shoulder fitting for operating the tripod; it looks rather like one of those harpoon guns for underwater fishing they have in the South of France.

British-made Bell and Howell equipment was on show on a Hamburg agent's stand, in the gallery of the main photo show. The Pathe Webbo camera was demonstrated in the cine section; I shall be interested to know how their 'reflex' viewfinder works by

comparison with the Arri. I suspect that they are not the same and that the Webbo is a Pathe-made version of the Cine Kodak Special.

Of accessories there was not much of a show. Screens, yes, but nothing startling. Editing equipment in small measure: a viewer rewriter by Kodak in the photo section and a very compact rewriter/splicer by Siemens in the cine section.

There was little to be seen of 9.5mm. or 8mm. Bauer have brought out a new 8mm. camera which takes both Gevaert and Agfa



The remarkable new projector just produced by Leitz, makers of the famous Leica camera.

Movex cassettes. The cheapest version sells in Germany for 383 DM—at the present rate, something like £31. It looks a nice straightforward little camera with few tricks, four speeds—8 to 48 per second—four lenses and complete in a small handful.

Coming back to London for our own B.I.F. I noted something that I wondered hadn't been done before. Apparently the Debie projectors using lamps of 110v. have always had a choke—as opposed to transformer or resistance—for dropping the voltage. They call it an L.F. Reactor. The one I saw coping with quite a lot of watts could not have been more than 3½ in. to 4 in. and could have weighed only a few ounces.

The same people had a new version of their arc projector on show and a base for a new transportable model. The latter incorporated a curved shoe to the main projector body and a curved matching groove in the base. It is now possible to tilt the projector some 30 degrees with extreme smoothness and complete safety. There is none of that alarming out-of-the-upright appearance.

Carpenter and Richardson were showing at Olympia a new portable projector for 16mm. sound and silent speeds, with

synchronous motor drive, separate fan motor, coated lenses and capacity for 2,000 ft. of film. The amplifier capacity is 8 watts, undistorted. The sound system eliminates mirrors.

New Specto Series

This year's B.I.F. had no official support from any of the photo or cine associations and in consequence there was little on show, but the few firms who did exhibit benefited. Specto Ltd. exhibited their new 500 Series, of which information has already been released. The blown resistance is another idea which, although not new, might well have been adopted by others. That there should be no tools required for conversion from 9.5 to 16mm. and vice-versa is another step forward. Also noteworthy is the small but most important point of relieving the 16mm. model and fitting only one row of sprocket teeth to enable sound films to be shown silent.

Not really part of the cine and photo exhibits at the B.I.F., but noteworthy for what can be done with 16mm. film is the new Burroughs-G.B.-Bell and Howell joint production of micro-filming equipment. There were three major items on the Burroughs stand in the office appliances section: a camera unit, a processing unit and a viewing unit.

No Shutter

The first took the form of a very nicely finished metal desk which had a slot into which documents could be fed. The film in the camera (it has no sprocket holes) is made to travel at the same relative rate as the documents. The photography is done through a slit but without shutter on the continuously moving film principle used in R.A.F. reconnaissance cameras. Either of two cameras can be plugged in, and ratios of up to 37/1 enlargement of detail can be obtained. The reader unit is far too versatile to be described here in detail; I must content myself with merely pointing out that the picture can be turned any possible way and run in any direction. The processing unit is fully automatic.

The G.B. and Bell and Howell engineers have copied the U.S.A. designs, it is true, but they have managed to go one better in several directions. As a piece of most interesting equipment it is well worth inspection—if only to see how seriously some people take the potentialities of 16mm. films and their emulsions and optics. The robustness and precision of the engineering put into this micro-filming plant merit the attention of all interested in the design and construction of cine equipment.

EDITING FOR THE ACTOR'S SAKE

*The things an editor does can save a bad performance
and make a good one better*

By TONY ROSE and MARTIN BENSON

You may have noticed that the relationship between the actors and the editor in an amateur film unit is usually marked by non-comprehension on the one hand and cheerful contempt on the other. This is a natural but not an ideal state of affairs because, if a good film is to result, the efforts of all concerned must be closely co-ordinated.

It is a comparatively simple matter for the actor to understand the requirements of the cameraman. You do not need to tell him more than twice that, if he walks too far to left or right, he will be out of the picture.

The editor, on the other hand, often remains an unseen and therefore unknown quantity. He only gets hold of the film when the actor's work is finished and then proceeds to do mysterious things to it. Yet the things that he does can save a bad performance and make a good one appear to be even better.

Suppose, for example, he picks up a long strip of film. It shows a girl standing on a station platform, waving goodbye to her sweetheart. He must decide whether to leave it long or cut it short and his decision may make all the difference between the audience thinking "How sweet, how poignant!" and "How much longer is that girl going to stand there waving?"

Obviously this is a crude example since most shots give some hint of a natural ending. The girl, perhaps, stands on tiptoe for a final wave, then relapses and turns away.

Now where is the editor to cut? That will depend very much on the following shot. He cannot, for instance, allow the girl to turn away and then cut to a shot of her sweetheart leaning from a train window still waving vigorously.

Equally, he cannot cut at the point where the girl is on her toes if the next shot shows the train as a mere speck in the distance. Either method would effectively sabotage the actors' efforts.

Clearly then the editor would need to be a perceptive chap even if his work were limited to cutting shots to their most effective length and joining them in a logical order. But most often he has, in addition, considerable scope for inter-cutting.

Imagine a scene in which the villain serves the heroine with a cup of poisoned coffee and she becomes suspicious. The director covers it with an establishing medium shot and with closer shots of the villain, the heroine and the cup for inter-cutting.

The editor starts to assemble it. He begins with the medium shot, cuts in to the villain as he hands over the fatal dose, then to the heroine taking it from him. She looks at the cup, up at the villain, back at the cup . . . after the third time it seems a trifle over-emphatic.

The editor, however, is not dismayed. He cuts after the first look up to a close-up of the villain, dead pan, and holds this for several seconds. Then back for just one downward glance at the cup. Alternatively, if the actor playing the villain is also given to facial gymnastics, he may decide to cut straight to the cup and hold that shot for several seconds. The cup will then do all the acting that is required. The idea gets over: she suspects him. And her reputation as an actress is saved.

Develop this idea to its logical conclusion and you realise that, while the editor cannot actually improve the quality of an acting performance, he can sharpen its effect infinitely by throwing

away the bad parts and bringing the good parts into relief. He can also infer by the use of inanimate objects like the coffee cup that an actor has registered certain emotions which, in fact, the audience never sees.

The editor, however, can only help the actor to the best advantage if the actor helps him by providing easily editable material. For example, a scene such as the one described, which is covered by both long and close shots, can only be edited properly if the action in both types of shots matches exactly.

If the villain hands over the cup with his right hand in the establishing shot, he must use his right hand again in the close shot and he must incline his body at the same angle. That, you may say, is simply a matter of mechanical continuity. Rather more difficult to grasp is the fact that there are, within many shots, natural cutting points and these must be clearly defined if the editor is to select them with ease and certainty.

In a certain amateur film there is a scene showing a young man alone in the lounge of a riverside house. He sits down in an armchair to await his hostess and, as he does so, catches sight of a stuffed fish in a glass case standing on the mantelshelf. For some reason this makes him uneasy. He picks up a book and hunches over it, determined to read. But he is unable to concentrate and his eyes stray upwards again to the fish.

In production this scene was covered by four shots:

1. A medium shot of the young man going through the complete action.
2. A close-up of the young man going through the latter part of the action.
3. A close-up of the fish.
4. A big close-up of the fish.

It was edited thus:

- A. Part of Shot 1—up to the point where the young man sees the fish.
- B. Shot 3—a longish piece.
- C. Another part of Shot 1—up to the point where the young man is trying to concentrate on the book.
- D. Part of Shot 2. His eyes stray up to the fish again.
- E. Shot 4—a short piece.

The actor playing the young man had to define two cutting points for the editor: his first unpremeditated look at

the fish and his second semi-reluctant glance up at it. He did this, in the first instance, by sitting down in such a way that his head came to rest against the back of the chair and then 'freezing' (as if at that second he had seen the fish). He remained perfectly still for a second or so before coming to life again as it were and deliberately looking away in search of the book.

Suppose the actor had not so defined the cutting point by isolating it from movement. Suppose he had spread his look at the fish over the action of sitting down and picking up the book—as one might do in real life. The editor could still have made a cut somewhere and the point of the scene would not have been entirely lost. But it would have lacked incisiveness. And the audience, without knowing the reason, would have been aware of something vaguely unsatisfactory.

It is important for the actor to realise that the good editor does not work entirely according to pre-conceived theoretical notions. He knows his theory, but he also knows that he must often depart from it in order to preserve the best of the human material which has gone into those strips of film he handles.

He feels his way through each shot, seeking an impulse that will guide him to the most effective cutting point. Usually that impulse is provided—whether consciously or not—by the actor. It may be only a flickering change of expression which suggests a transition to the following shot.

The actor who can bring himself to understand something of this patient process that will go on when his own work is finished is truly a film actor. He is the one who can actively help to shape a scene, rather than just go through the motions and then complain afterwards that the movies afford one no chance to be creative.

For the 8mm. Worker

We regret that comments on the films Highly Commended and Commended in the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best Competition are held over from this issue, but they will appear next month. Next month, too, we shall be publishing the first of a comprehensive series of articles on 8mm.

PAGES FROM

A LONE-WORKER'S DIARY

By J. VERNEY

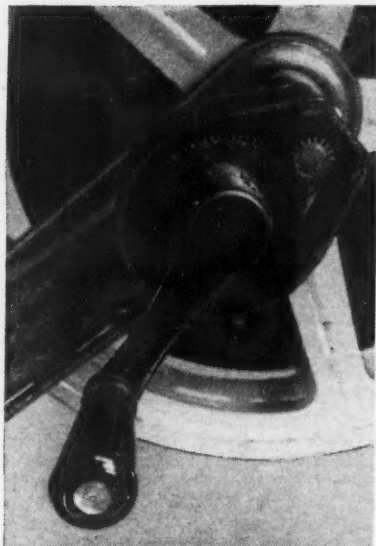
May 1st. You may recall my enthusing over the advantages of a rigid screen for home use in the May issue. I have always been in favour of them so I was particularly interested in the one they have in the Birmingham Photographic Society's excellent club room.

It was installed, I believe, before the war and is mounted permanently on the wall. It consists of a sheet of 16 or 18 gauge pure aluminium with a surface which appears to have been prepared by "shot-blasting". Pure aluminium had to be used because of the susceptibility of the alloy to corrosion unless anodised.

Today it is still as good as when it was first put up and I noted that, in use, it is remarkably brilliant over a very wide area and seemed to combine the best features of both silver and glass beaded surfaces. Some London cinemas have stainless steel screens but this is the first time I have seen this method used by amateurs—it can certainly be recommended. By the way, I went to the Birmingham P.S. to see the selection of UNICA prize-winning films which were going the rounds—a most interesting programme.

May 7th. A trip today to Gloucester. My friend Laurie is a flute player in the New Light Orchestra—a body of local amateurs—and he invited me to come along to watch them take part in a recording session. I jumped at the chance, of course, and was particularly interested when I discovered that it was Charles Carson (the producer of *Lady for Lunch*—one of the 1950 Ten Best) who was to record the music for a documentary about Heidelberg University—*The Student of Heidelberg*.

The musical score had been specially composed by Keith Powell Davis who conducted the orchestra. I must say



The hand rewind fitted to the author's Ampro projector. See entry for May 16th.

that from the first hearing the piece appealed to me and I think it might well become popular commercially.

Recording took place at a professional studio. A 601 projector was used (the governed speed had been carefully checked first) and the film projected from a sound-proof booth through a port on to a screen in the recording studio. The conductor could therefore watch the film and ensure that the music matched perfectly. The orchestra had previously been rehearsed to stop-watch timings.

After careful microphone tests and a number of monitor tests, 12 in. acetate discs were cut. The play-backs showed excellent quality. Only the outside grooves were used, as the discs will be required for dubbing later.

Mr. Carson proposes re-recording from the discs on to tape and adding a commentary. The tape will then be fine-edited with the film and finally a S.O.F. print will be made. It will be interesting to see if there is any serious loss of quality by this method.

May 16th. Decided this evening that motor rewinds are not for me. I have always preferred to rewind by hand

because it has always seemed to me that this method is much kinder to the film, in addition to saving wear and tear on the machine. As the diameter of the spool increases, the speed of winding can be so much more readily controlled and it is easy to take the extra care needed at the end to avoid snatch.

Excellent philosophy, but a couple of days ago I was packing up my gear for a show and found that the improvements made to my speaker (see the June issue) had resulted in there not being enough room in the case for the pair of rewind arms I usually carry! Then came the Big Idea. I would use the machine's own spool arms after the fashion of the

Eumig P.III and Agfa Movector 8. The photograph shows the idea.

Two gear wheels were unearthed from the junk box, giving a ratio of 5 to 1 and the handle was acquired from an old pencil sharpener. The guard was made not only for the sake of appearance but also as a safety factor — the momentum when rewinding 1,600 ft. reels is quite considerable.

Although the ratio might be considered a trifle high (4 to 1 is more normal) it is, in practice, quite satisfactory and even advantageous with small reels. And, of course, if the projector is used for editing, this sort of rewind is particularly useful.

You Must Think the Part

(Continued from page 235)

obviously be difficult to work to such a pattern, but even so, your actions must be "taped".

The mechanics must go like clock-work! Count the number of paces to a chair; do gestures to numbers—use these and similar dodges to make sure you do the right thing at the right moment. Getting the mechanics off pat will help you to relax. Another great aid towards relaxation is natural use of the hands. When your hands are not being used in a gesture, or in handling a prop, you should be able to forget them. This may not prove so easy as it sounds.

The film actor must avoid fidgety, distracting actions. If an actor does not know what else to do with his hands, he usually stuffs them into his pockets, if not his trousers pockets, then the pockets of his jacket, with thumbs protruding, and elbows stuck well out. The latter method of getting the hands out of the way invariably looks awkward, and clutching the lapels of the coat as if to deliver a speech (another habit of hand-conscious actors) is worse. I often wonder what these actors do when wearing period costume without pockets or lapels!

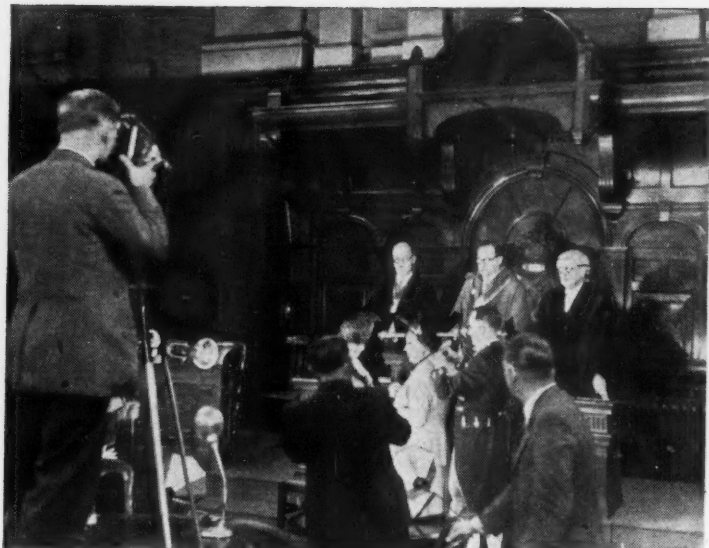
You are not likely to be drummed out of your club for stowing your hands in your pockets; the director may even suggest that you do so. But it is important that you should learn to shed self-consciousness about hands. They

should not feel twice their normal size as soon as you walk on the set.

To be relaxed you must also wear dress which fits well, a costume in which you can walk comfortably, one which does not restrict any movement or gesture. If the film is in modern dress, you should if possible wear your own clothes. If they're not your own clothes, make it your business to wear them and get used to them before filming. Sleeves which are even a trifle too long, or a hat which is on the small side, can be a source of anxiety. Get such things put right.

If you are unhappy about your make-up, that worry may well come under the heading of those superfluous thoughts I have warned you about. If a part calls for an actor to be unshaven, he should let his beard grow for a day or two. Don't try to achieve the effect with make-up. A still supplied to *A.C.W.* recently by a film club showed a poor attempt to make a medium-sized player look fat. (I think a cushion had been used!) Much better to give the part to a fat man. If an actor knows he looks right, he'll feel right.

I can promise you that once you have mastered the technique, once you have learned to relax, you will really enjoy film acting. You will enjoy it in spite of the distractions on the set, the rehearsals and the retakes. And remember always the Rosetta stone which solves the mystery of film acting: *you must think the part.*



The President of the Wulfrun A.C.C. is the Mayor of Wolverhampton, and the club is making a film of his year of office. Here they are seen filming the robing of the Mayoress. Standing at the rear are the Deputy Mayor, the Mayor (Councillor L. R. Guy) and the Town Clerk.

A SELECTION OF

ODD SHOTS

By GEORGE H. SEWELL, F.R.P.S.

Unrepentant. So the old man is too reminiscent and crotchety, say correspondents. Believe me, I'm delighted there should be full-blooded criticism. It's so good for everybody's ego!

I know I grouse about little things. I always have; but perhaps that is because I come of a generation who had the importance of them impressed upon them. "Look after the pennies, the pounds will look after themselves." You know the kind of thing. And I like to think that, while I and my generation may have groused quite a bit about the small things, we learned not to flap when the big ones came along.

When I was a young chap (actually not so very many years ago) there was a generation of us all playing around with this 'new' hobby of amateur cinematography. Because we were young, because it was all new to us, we 'knew it all'. We thought we had invented the thing. But it had all been done before by the true pioneers—and before them

experimenters in various other fields had made their contribution.

Then came the gap caused by the war, and now another new generation exactly like my own (except for the funny clothes) are finding the thing out all over again. They, too, have 'invented' the hobby; they, too, are doing all sorts of things 'for the first time', and they rather go out of their way to tell us old curmudgeons what back numbers we are.

So it is probably with something of a retaliative instinct that I mention those of my contemporaries who have become an ornament to a profession that they built out of a hobby. Besides which, there might be a message in all this for some of to-day's young men who are going to do the same thing. I can spot one or two of them already. So I remain quite unrepentant. And in any case, the young 'uns won't take any notice of me.

Code of Conduct. My young friend

John Dempsey, of Preston & District Cine Society, in a letter to me, expresses a thought that could be with advantage pondered on in every cine club: "I think the important point is that one is expected to help and share experiences rather than just be on the receiving end and in return for an annual fee". What a pity so many club members forget this!

The Film Sense. I have just been looking through three 400 ft. films on crafts and industries made by school-teachers—the product of a week-end training course at which I gave the inaugural talk. These people are used to teaching and to the logical presentation of ideas, and in one of the films this was reflected outstandingly not only in the general construction but also in the thoughtful choice of camera angles. Nor was the editing too bad, either. The second one was nearly as good, but the third one was just terrible: inconsequent shots, untidy build up, redundancies and irrelevancies, omissions of important parts of the subject, titles telling the story instead of picture—all this in spite of some instruction.

Being able to talk well about things does not indicate picture making ability. Will the more voluble members of cine clubs please note!

Rehearsing. The other day some of my professional colleagues and myself were discussing the techniques used in some—but I am afraid not many—professional circles of thoroughly rehearsing scenes beforehand to arrive at a completely water-tight routine that will go through without a hitch when actual shooting is taking place. Everyone rehearses—electricians, the scenery bods., all the technicians. Furthermore, artistes may first rehearse quite separately from the technicians who work out their own problems before combined rehearsals are started. It seems to me that this offers great possibilities for the amateur. How many clubs break up because members have got tired of sitting round for hours while one small section tries to solve its individual problems in their presence? Then the production goes on for weeks, people drop out, the heroine gets mumps, the hero goes abroad, and everything falls to bits.

If you adopt the pre-rehearsal technique you can confine the shooting period to the minimum, with the participants still maintaining the white heat of enthusiasm, and get the whole thing in the box before interest starts to weaken. Try it some time!

Magnifying the Subject. Have you ever tried shooting through a hand magnifying glass? I know that some of the more technically minded workers have done this many times; but I also suggest to the story film makers that it can be a most valuable dramatic device if used not more than once in a film. (There is seldom justification for repeating such a mannered trick).

Selling Scripts. We A.C.W. contributors have often stressed the importance of the story and script in the making of a good film. I notice that in the U.S.A. they go farther. There are professional companies who will either sell you a stock script or, better still but more expensive, write you one for your own family, holiday or any other purpose.

Somehow I think the fumbling of the almost entirely inexperienced amateur is the better way. His script may lack slickness, but goodness me! what a lot of fun it gives in the writing, and how untrammelled and original it *can* be. Now and then it is. Think of 16 year old Bill Dobson! Would any professional have thought of writing the script of *His Crumbling World* for a lad of that age?

Rushing In . . . "Is there any way", asks one of my correspondents, "of fixing up a tripod for a pan shot in a hurry?" I am afraid I brusquely replied: "If you are in a hurry, you are not in a fit state to make a pan, and you never fix up a tripod in a hurry, anyway. The artist making a sketch may take an hour or two, surely you can spare a minute or so to set up!"

Rip Van Winkles. In a book of mine which was first published in 1938 I wrote: "It is unfortunate that the makers of photoflood reflector equipment do not yet appear to have awakened to the need for some kind of spotlight . . . There are such fittings for photofloods in the U.S.A. . . . In my opinion it is impossible to obtain interesting lighting without the

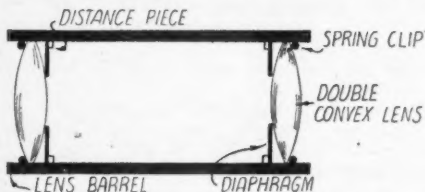
The Workshop

You are invited to contribute to this feature. If you have produced a cine gadget which you think to be rather novel or which at any rate does its job efficiently, we shall be pleased to hear from you. Payment is made for all material published.

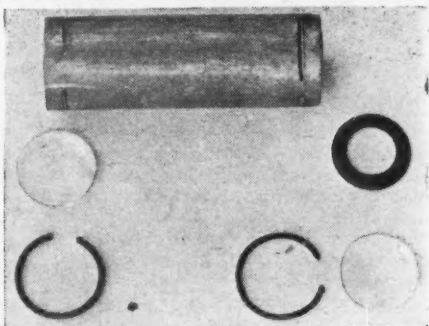
LONG FOCUS LENS FOR THE 200B

Collecting together a number of double-convex-lenses (those rounded on both faces, like ordinary magnifying glasses), I began to experiment with the making of a long-focus lens for my Pathescope 200B projector. With the aid of lenses from the normal optician's eyeglass I made first a lens of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. focal length. The component lenses were $\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter. Only one diaphragm was used in this model but two were later fitted as shown in the diagram below.

Testing the lens in a small hall later I found that the projector was too far back from the



This diagram shows the lens layout used by the author.



Lens components consisting of lens barrel, front and rear lenses, securing clips and diaphragm.

screen—I wanted a picture 6 ft. wide, and that meant a throw of 50 ft. Further calculations indicated that I required a lens that would give me a 6 ft. picture at 36 ft. instead of the throw of 24 ft. needed with the usual $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. lens fitted to the 200B. Multiplying $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $1\frac{1}{2}$ gave me approximately 2 in. as the ideal focal length.

Now that I knew the focal length of lens I should need I could start work in earnest and more juggling with lenses gave me the result I required. The diagram shows the physical arrangement. The inner surface of the lens barrel was, of course, painted matt black. I obtained a lot of useful information from my experiments, and should I later decide to buy a high-class lens of proper manufacture I shall know just what focus would suit my purpose best. W. G. PRATTIS.

use of spots!" Perhaps in another 12 years...

Strong Man. A club member wrote to me: "When we come to doing something as a combined effort we fall down... Each member has a different idea and no idea gets past the embryo stage." I told the club they wanted a strong man to knock their heads together, someone to make decisions and see they were carried out. Clubs must learn the elements of co-operation and discipline instead of continuing to practise unintelligent individualism. If a group is going to work, everybody has to give up something for the common good.

Speculation. The Hon. John Collier, writing on oil painting, in 1890,

said: "It is a melancholy fact that more nonsense can be talked about art than about any other subject". He also pointed out how important it was for the student painter to learn his *craft* "to whatever use he may mean to put his art eventually". The dictum still applies—and applies equally well to movies. For, to quote Collier again, "there is nothing so deadening to the imagination as to try to express it with inadequate means".

Striking The Right Note. If you are editing music or effects quite closely to picture, a good tip is to cover the previous portion of the sound track with narrow scotch tape or blooping tape, so that the desired note on the track cuts in at full strength at the end of it. This gives a positive moment at which to synchronise.

Cine Bookshelf

HOW TO CARTOON By John Halas and Bob Privett. (Focal Press, 127pp., 6s.)

This book is concise, comprehensive, and very readable. It will be read with pleasure and profit by all cinematographers—including the majority who are never likely to do more than an occasional shot of cartoon or animation work. For the cartoon and animation enthusiast it is invaluable.

The material is set out with logic and clarity under nine main headings. "From Script to Screen" and "Materials for Animation" are in the main introductory, with notes on apparatus. In "Speed and Timing" expressive line drawings support the text: our only complaint is that 24 frames per sec. is chosen as the standard animation speed. After all, the amateur who does as well as Felix or Aesop's Fables of the 1925 period will surely be reasonably satisfied, and 16 frames per sec. saves a lot of film—and drawing.

"Beginning to Animate" and "Some Principles of Movement" conduct the reader through the drawing techniques to such conventions as the degree of squashing that occurs when a lump of concrete is heavily hit by an iron bar. Scales of non-linear movement are included, p. 40.

"Characters and Script," though important in establishing basic forms for creating characters, is the least interesting section, since the scripting parts are common for all films. After a few pages on short

cuts, "Making Things Easier," comes the section on "Producing the Cartoon". This emphasizes the need for team-work, for a precise operating drill, and for quality in whichever technique is adopted.

Finally there is a section on "Photography". This, though not really misleading, contains errors which we should like to see corrected. The need for register pins is exaggerated (pages 104 & 120). Equally, a reflex viewfinder, rarity that it is, is far from essential (page 103). There are several small errors on page 104. "Halation" on p. 107 should read "Hot spots", which expression is given in the useful glossary. And the passage on page 113 about altering the shutter angle is not really necessary.

These are details which we hope will not deter the owner of a simple camera, with which excellent work can be done. The authors seem rather uncertain about photography, and this may have caused them to adopt an excessively cautious tone in this section, and prevented them from achieving the clarity which pervades the rest of the book.

We can unhesitatingly commend this book, and feel that owners of it may even want to lend it to non-technical friends, such parts as the section on "Some Principles Of Movement", pages 47 to 65, being (in our opinion) of wide interest and deserving a place in film appreciation lectures. The cartoon is an art form, and it will hurt nobody to understand a little more about the strange mechanics taken for granted by the innumerable admirers of Mickey, Pluto and Co.

Amateur Sound Conversion and Recorder Win Awards

Anyone who visited the 2nd annual Exhibition of the British Sound Recording Association at the Waldorf Hotel, London, on the 19th and 20th May, could not have failed to have noticed the informal atmosphere that pervaded the crowded hall. Remembering that a good half of the 800 B.S.R.A. members are amateur enthusiasts, manufacturers had hastened to unbend and could not have been more co-operative.

Many of the twenty-three exhibitors also demonstrated apparatus in the hotel ballroom, providing a unique opportunity for the enthusiast to hear and compare records, pick-ups, amplifiers, loudspeakers and recorders all working under the same conditions. Besides a number of disc recorders for making both standard and LP recordings, there were several new tape recorders. Some of those intended for professional use cost about twice as much as the usual home recorders.

Of the professional models, the Leever-Rich model C was of particular interest as it had been designed to run off a 12 volt battery, and incorporated means of synchronising to film. Half the tape was used to record a sync. pulse derived from the camera, which on playback was fed to a double beam cathode ray tube, where it could be timed against a similar pulse supplied from the projector or S.O.F.

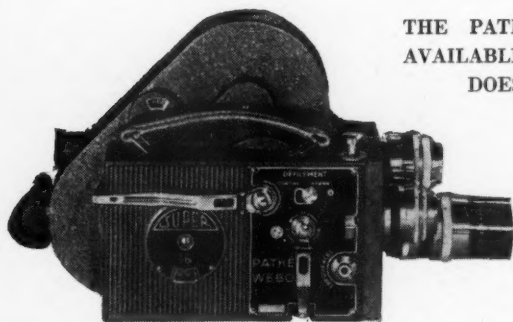
recorder, and the tape speed altered accordingly.

Messrs. Wirek Electronics were showing a portable battery operated tape recorder weighing only 15 lb., which has distinct possibilities for cine applications. There seemed to be only one tape recorder, however, that had been designed especially for amateur cine work. This, made by Excel Sound Services, incorporates a special electro-mechanical link to synchronise it to a projector. In the latest model, sync. can be varied continuously to offset tape creep. Also fitted is a calibrated bias control by means of which speech can be superimposed on top of background music—a boon to the lone worker! But it was disappointing to learn that hardly any of these new machines were available for immediate delivery.

One of the highlights of the exhibition was the display of amateur-built apparatus. There were over twenty items, ranging from a small condenser microphone to a full size recording console, and including (for one day only) the portable tape recorder recently described in A.C.W. Of S.O.F. exhibits, there was a fine Specto 16mm. sound conversion, and a 16mm. S.O.F. recorder complete with delicate light valve. These two items, incidentally, won first and second prizes respectively in the amateur competition.

DESMOND ROE.

WE TEST THE NEW APPARATUS



THE PATHE WEBBO CAMERA,
AVAILABLE IN 9.5mm. AND 16mm.,
DOES EVERYTHING

We paid this excellent camera the compliment of taking it straight out on the job of recording a local ceremony, and shot three 50 ft. reels including three lap-dissolves and several fades, working in dubious weather with apertures ranging from $f/4$ to $f/11$ —and not one single shot was below standard. We admit we had the Bolex with us in case of emergency, and used it for one reel: quality between the two cameras was indistinguishable, even the frame-line matching!

The Webbo, available for 9.5mm. or 16mm., is in the specialist class, and has these features:—

Die-cast construction, attractive grey wrinkle finish, flat base (useful) with brass tripod bush, weight $5\frac{1}{2}$ lb., 4 in. wide x $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. high x $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. long over 3 in. lens. Capacity 100 feet, footage indication by lever against supply reel, supported by frame counter registering 0 to 135 frames and repeating.

Variable Speeds

Drive by long-running spring motor, 30 feet at one winding. A bell chimes four turns before the spring is fully wound-up. Hand-drive by 8-frames-per-turn handle. Winding back is against the motor spring, so cannot be done when the spring has been fully wound. Taking speeds infinitely variable from 8 to 80 frames per second, calibrated and marked for 8, 16, 24, 32, 64, and 80. The spring and the hand-turn handles fold neatly back for parking when not in use.

The shutter is variable in opening from 180 degrees (giving the usual $1/32$ of a second exposure at 16 frames per sec.) to fully closed, and is operated by a lever under the lenses.

Operation is by a vertical push-button, which is in addition screwed to receive the

18-inch flexible release supplied with the camera. The button is turned slightly to lock for continuous running. A selector under the button has four positions: for normal filming, single frames, time exposures, and locking to prevent operation.

Two viewfinders are provided. One is a normal direct type, with front window suiting the standard 1 inch lens and an engraved rectangle to suit the 3 inch lens; the other is a reflex finder, permitting a view *through the taking lens* of precisely what is being "seen" by the film. This works on the principle of a partially-reflecting mirror between lens and gate, which passes 8% of the image brilliance away from the film and into this finder.

No Parallax

The effect on exposure is negligible, and the result is an immeasurable advantage in filming—no parallax whatsoever, you see the precise field, and the precise focus, of the lens in use. The image is a little dim, but we very soon grew accustomed to it. A rubber adjustable eye-piece is fitted, as it is important not to let light leak unduly back down this finder, or fogging is caused to the frame in the gate and the following frame.

For the same reason, a shutter is provided to close the reflex finder. We forgot to close it on one or two occasions, but in no case did the fogging exceed two frames, and anyway these are both end frames of a shot. In the ordinary run of things, the camera mechanism starts so briskly that the first frame of each shot is hardly discernibly more exposed than the remainder.

A neat triangular turret for three lenses is fitted, but the spacing is closer than normal so that a lens of wider angle than the standard 1 inch fouls the telephoto. In addition, though the lens mounts are the standard for 16mm. cameras, there is less depth of thread than usual, due to the reflex finder, so that common wide-angle lenses such as the Dallmeyer or the Kern 15mm. cannot be used. Instead, Berthiot supply a wide-angle supplementary attachment to

screw into the 1 inch lens, giving the equivalent of a 12½mm. lens.—the widest angle obtainable on 16mm. In using this, the telephoto still has to be unscrewed, due to fouling.

Loading we found extremely easy. You quarter-turn a button on the lid, which fits snugly and is well light-trapped, and this releases four catches so that the lid can be lifted off. You clear the footage counter lever to place the supply spool on its spindle. Two plunger-secured guides hold the film against a 16-tooth sprocket.

Film Steadiness

The gate opens by pivoting from its top end, about the axis of the claw operating pin, which is exposed since, rightly, the claw is situated on the correct side for sound film. The gate can be locked open, for loading and cleaning, by clipping against its tensioning spring. The pressure-plate is separately sprung from this pivoted assembly.

Clear markings indicate the loop lengths, and the claw being towards you it is easy to check that all is well. Formed loop plates give a precaution against scratching if too large loops are left. Film steadiness is good, as proved by the absence of float during mixes. We should perhaps add that this camera affords no loading precautions against the careless operator. It is possible to shut the camera door with one or both sprocket guides adrift, and the gate not shut, and run the camera merrily away, murdering the film.

Design Compromises

In such an excellent camera, it is a little annoying that the two lenses supplied both have *f*/16 as their smallest stops; and it is well briefly to examine the pros and cons of some of the design compromises:—

Frame counter. The 135-frame (3½ secs.) repeating type enables you to load without lost leader worries (see March, 1951, *A.C.W.*, p. 1084), to manipulate dissolves and superimpositions, and in fact to do anything except locate a particular frame far removed in the reel, which in any case is precluded by the limited wind-back. It is only marked every 5 frames, so some estimation is necessary; and it is upset on winding up the spring.

Lens Turret. It certainly is a disadvantage not to be able to use the 15mm., 1 inch, and 3 inch lenses all at once on the turret, but the reflex finder advantage far outweighs this.

Finder. In those numerous shots where no particular finder accuracy is needed, most operators will prefer to leave the reflex finder closed and use the direct finder; it is therefore a pity that this does not cover the field of a wide-angle lens.

Filters. Are we never satisfied? We

wish there were provision to slide filters between lens and gate, partly because one filter would thus serve three lenses, and partly because the filter would not then dim the reflex finder image.

The design contains many neat features: there is audible warning when the shutter is closed, for example. The variable shutter enables you to arrest motion (see Dec., 1949, *A.C.W.*, page 691). The carrying handle gives a nice feeling of balance.

Fading

Handling is very satisfactory: for example, we were able to make a fade-out without the tripod, the left forefinger operating the shutter control. Such fading needs concentration, the amount of lever movement decreasing towards the end, for a uniform fade. We found that after two reels we were thoroughly at home with the camera.

Oiling and cleaning are easy. The original French instructions are comprehensive, but rather sketchy provisional English instructions are at present issued.

The finish is good, but mechanical quality is a little lower than that of the Bolex and Kodak Special, as is only to be expected in view of the difference in price. For example, the lens turret does not snap so crisply into place, the starting button needs decided pressure, the sprocket guide plungers have to be lifted home. But these are minor points, and do not affect operation: indeed, as engineers will appreciate, they are characteristic of the general difference between French and Swiss instruments.

In our opinion, the Webo is an asset to the camera aristocracy. With it, every effect and trick in cinematography's huge repertoire can be accomplished; and it represents, by present-day standards, first class value for money. Price: with 1 in. *f*/1.9 and 3 in. *f*/3.5 Berthiot Cinor bloomed lenses: £229 6s. 8d.

(Submitted by Messrs. Pathoscope Ltd., North Circular Road, London, N.W.2.)

Forthcoming reviews. The following equipment is under test and it is hoped to publish reports on it in forthcoming issues: Haynor 2 Animated Projection viewer; Todd Tank for home processing; Maxilite Beaded Screen.

A.C.W. Exposure Tables

In the instructions for using the exposure tables published in last month's issue, we pointed out that the conditions under which one opens up the stop "applies to Group A and B only" (second paragraph in the section on Procedure, page 150). The A and B refers to the first two light classifications given in the chart and not to the film groups, but since we decided, in order to simplify matters, not to letter the light classifications after all, you could scarcely be expected to know this! The instructions should read: "This applies to Brilliant Sun and Hazy Sun conditions only," and in fact do so in the reprints which will be available free to readers who have the A.C.W. badge, details of which are given on page 226.

Where to see the 1950 Ten Best Films

	Date of Show	Theatre	Time	Presented by	Tickets
LONDON	June 18, 19,	Lewisham Town Hall, Catford, S.E.6	7.45 p.m.	Williams's Cine and Public Address Services	2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., 1s., from Lewisham New Town Hall Booking Office, London, S.E.6. (Telephone Hither Green 3431).
SHEFFIELD	June 20, 21, 22	Nether Chapel, Norfolk Street, Sheffield 1	7.30 p.m.	City Films Kine Society	2s., from E. R. Wilson, 10 Asline Road, Sheffield 2.
MANCHESTER	June 29, 30	M.A.P.S. Memorial Hall, Albert Square	7.30 p.m.	Eccles Amateur Cine Group	Admission by programme (2s.) from E. Higgins, 17 Baxton St., Higher Broughton, Manchester, 7
CARSHALTON	June 30	Carshalton Public Hall, High Street	8.00 p.m.	Ad Astra Cine Club	Admission by programme (1s. 9d.) from J. D. Burns, 41 Leechcroft Road, Wallington, Surrey.
WORTHING	July 15	Court Room, Worthing Town Hall	3.00 p.m. 7.30 p.m.	Sussex Film Society	2s., from J. P. Howard, 126 Eastern Avenue, Shoreham by Sea, Sussex.
PORT BLASOW	Aug. 13, 14	Lithgow Club Cinema, Boundary Street	7.30 p.m.	The Lithgow Club	1/6, from the Clubmaster, Lithgow Club, Boundary St., Port Glasgow.
LEIGH	Aug. 14, 15	Leigh Church Institute, Henrietta St.	7.30 p.m.	Leigh and District Cine Socy.	2s., from E. Sourbutts, 71 Henrietta Street, Leigh, Lancs.

This Show Diary, covering the period June 15th to August 15th contains only those presentations for which we have received complete details at the time of going to press. Shows will also take place at:

Aberdeen, Wallasey, Stafford, Plymouth, Welwyn Garden City, Bristol, Warrington, Wolverhampton, Whitby, Norwich, Harrogate, St. Helier (Jersey), Hull, Halifax, Bexleyheath, Leicester, Newport (Isle of Wight), Cardiff, Cambridge, Sutton Coldfield, York, Sheffield, Nottingham, Edinburgh, Coventry, Skegness, Liverpool, Belfast, Todmorden, London (S.E.), Wigan, Bath, Glasgow, Uxminster, Mansfield, Trowbridge, Lytham St. Annes, Torquay, Harrow, Blackburn, Lancaster, Sutton-in-Ashfield, London (North), Southport, Cambridge, Lincoln, Sunderland, Hedden Bridge, Burton-on-Trent, Oxford, Huddersfield, Ashford, Rhondda, Pontefract, Bradford, Northampton, Dumbarton, Oldham, Barnet, Poole, Middlesbrough, London (East), Swindon, Eastbourne, Cheam, Stoke-on-Trent, South Shields, East Grinstead, Bournemouth.

Full details will appear in future issues. Please note that this is not a complete list.

PROJECT FOR A FILM

by DERRICK H. KNIGHT

Experimental Film Group, Oxford University Film Society

British amateur cinematographers are numerous and active, but we do not think they have been adventurous enough—and we hasten to add that this criticism includes our own efforts up to now. Many British amateur films are interesting, amusing and clever, and they frequently reach a high technical standard, but how often do they introduce their audiences to anything new? Are not most of them more or less skilful variants of the kind of entertainment or instruction already supplied so plentifully by the local cinema?

This lack of originality, we think, is due largely to an obsession with technique, so that the quest for good photography, striking angles and startling effects—in short, for new ways of saying things—obstructs the search for something new to say. The technicians are in charge and the artists are nowhere—often literally so, for the competent technician is a lot easier to come by than an artist whose imagination can find a new use for the film medium.

Yet if the amateur film is to do anything worthwhile, the creative artist must have a share in it. Those avant-garde films which are now commonplace of the film society repertoire, and which have often had an unacknowledged but powerful effect on the development of commercial films, usually resulted from the enterprise of writers and artists who have often become more famous for their work in the commercial cinema, or in arts outside the cinema altogether.

Study the credit lists of such films such as *Entr'acte*, *Night Mail*, *The Seashell and the Clergyman*, *Le Sang d'un Poète*, *Ballet Mécanique*, *Dreams that Money can Buy*, or *Un Chien Andalou*, and you will find names like Cocteau, Dali, Fernand Léger, Picabia, Darius Milhaud, W. H. Auden, Benjamin Britten, Alexander

Calder and many other celebrated poets, artists and composers.

We must now come out into the open and say that we feel we have in Oxford at present the right conditions for making a true avant-garde film. We have the artists, who have the ideas, and we have the technicians to put them into effect. The Oxford University Film Society's Experimental Film Group, feeling that it has served its technical apprenticeship (we would not claim more) in making *Our College* (Highly Commended in the A.C.W. 1948 Ten Best Competition) and *Sestrières* 1949, is now ambitious to plunge into the deep waters of artistic experiment.

It is proposed to make an abstract 16mm. film in colour, lasting about 20 minutes, with the minimum of story necessary for continuity. We think that this will be a truly experimental film, the first attempt to make an abstract cinema ballet in which everything is conceived in terms of moving patterns. Though there have, of course, been many *drawn* abstract films, there has not before been one which converts human dancers and real sets and props into a moving design created by the camera.

The idea is to combine dancers, sculpture, sets, colour, camera movement and music into a design imagined by an artist who has already distinguished himself as an engraver and a sculptor. This is Sam Kaner, a young American who recently held a successful exhibition in the British Council premises at Oxford. He has conceived the following idea for a film, which we intend to shoot in Oxford between July and September.

The action, which describes the reactions to the world of a blind man before and after he learns to see, opens in a studio where we are introduced to various

props which figure prominently in the story. There are three characters: the Blind Man (the principal male dancer); the Girl (the leading woman dancer); and a mysterious bearded figure, the Guide. With each is associated a colour, respectively blue, red and yellow, a musical theme, and an instrument; these appear according to the significance of each character at any given moment, and are often in conflict. Drums are to have an important dramatic role—the score will range from jazz to primitive native chants.

Starting in the 'studio', the action moves to a wood, to an operating theatre, a bar, and the streets of a city. We see illustrated in dances the Blind Man's growing confidence and knowledge of the world, his encountering of the Guide, his loss of the Girl, his desperate efforts to adjust himself to life, and his death.

It is clear how important to the action will be the design of sets and sculptures, and the style of choreography. The director, the choreographer and the composer will work in equal partnership with Mr. Kaner, the technicians being their interpreters and servants. We have already been promised the help of an army of talent.

In addition, several sculptors, both in Paris and in Oxford, have volunteered their services. A continuity girl, costume makers, carpenters, lighting technicians, and various other assistants have also been found, and are willing to remain in Oxford during the summer for the production. Mr. Kaner has written a full first treatment of the scenario, which will be broken down into a shooting script with the help of the choreographer and director.

A film like this is bound to raise, for amateurs, financial problems as formidable as the technical ones. We are budgeting for an expenditure of about £500, for although all the artists and technicians will be working for love, we can hardly expect to obtain colour equipment and processing on the same terms!

We have already received considerable backing. We are finding some £75 from our own sources. The British Film Institute have been very encouraging by granting us £50, and assuring us of their help in securing equipment and publicity. The Federation of Film Societies has also shown itself to be extremely sympathetic to our project. Individual film societies have promised sums of up to £10 each. Among these are the Boston F.S., the Tyneside F.S., and the Oxford City F.S. Film Centre Ltd., anxious to help in the work of anybody attempting to solve the problems of the filming aspects of dancing, may be able to help us obtain certain non-theatrical distribution facilities which would have the ultimate effect of assisting us financially.

We are hoping that the film—and the response to the project—will help establish the principle that the growing audience for specialised films in the film societies and art cinemas should combine to make some of its own films. If this became a common practice, it might realise Thorold Dickinson's vision of a world-wide chain of specialised cinemas and societies, big enough to enable films outside the commercial rut to pay their way. There is already a scattered but increasing demand for such films: it needs only to be organised.

News from the Societies

Reports for the August issue, on sale July 16th, should reach us not later than June 18th. Club production stills are always welcome and should preferably be half-plate glossy prints.

Ad Astra C.C. (Hon. Sec.: J. D. Burns, 41 Leechcroft Road, Wallington, Surrey). At most club shows during the past two years there has appeared some additional improvement in either presentation or equipment until it seemed that saturation point must have been reached. At the latest show, however, member Vic Winkley produced an extractor fan mounted on a board which fits into an auditorium window without any need for modifications, effectively silencing complaints about the smoky atmosphere! This go-ahead spirit augurs well for the club's presentation of the 1950 Ten Best Films on June 30th. Details on page 279.

Albany Productions F.U. (Hon. Sec.: G. Denman, 111 St. Leonards Road, Hove, Sussex). Recent assignments for the club's newsreel cameramen included the filming of activities on the Southwick site for a new power station and a big cycle race meeting at Brighton. Cameras were also turning when Princess Elizabeth visited Brighton and Hove on her recent tour of Sussex. *Vaudeville* was screened at the last monthly film show of the season with Chaplin and Harold Lloyd comedies.

Ardleigh House F.S. (Hon. Sec.: Mrs. K. M. Gillham, Windover, The Grove, Upminster, Essex). Good progress is being made with *A Good Name*, the documentary about the growth and development of Hornchurch, commissioned by the Hornchurch Council. Several shorts have been filmed indoors during the winter months to give the less experienced members a chance to try their hand. The new session begins in September when anyone interested in films and film-making will be welcomed. Experience is not necessary.

Ashfield C.C. (Hon. Sec.: K. E. Broughton, "Siddalls" Huthwaite, Notts.). At the second A.G.M. held recently officers for the year 1951/52 were elected and a summer programme approved. Film production ranks high on the list of proposed activities. The presentation of the 1949 Ten Best Films was attended by visitors from many parts of Notts. and Derby and

was voted a very successful evening. *Eggs for Breakfast*, *Post Haste*, *Paper Boat* and *Nature's Way* proved to be the most popular films.

Ashley F.U. (Hon. Sec.: John Daborn, 5 Ashley Drive, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey). Drawings that *Move*, a short 9.5mm. film dealing with the production of an amateur colour cartoon, is well under way. Colour will probably be introduced for the cartoon sequences. Work on the live action film is delayed pending the selection of a suitable leading lady. There are also vacancies for other actors and actresses. Members visited Slough recently for the presentation of the 1949 Ten Best and later came to London for the Planet Premiere of the 1950 films.

Auckland Eight Movie Club Inc. (Hon. Sec.: E. B. Ellerm, c/o Leys Institute Library, Ponsonby, W.1, Auckland, New Zealand). *Our Wedding Day*, by S. G. Johnson gained first prize in the recent monthly competition with a total of 70 marks out of a possible 100. A comedy cameo was filmed in one evening recently with two club cameras. Members were invited to shoot the scenes as well—a useful way of gaining experience of indoor filming. The prize-winning film in the annual competition was shown last month.

Bela C.C. (Hon. Sec.: John Clark, Grey Walls, Church Street, Milnthorpe, Westmorland). Membership is increasing steadily, the good attendance at weekly club nights reflecting the members' enthusiasm. Film production is planned to begin shortly. It has been decided that a good camera must be obtained first and efforts are being made to raise money for this purpose. An extension to the club room is contemplated. New members are welcome.

Belfast Y.M.C.A. C.S. (Hon. Sec.: E. Silver, 12 Wellington Place, Belfast). Following a talk on home processing by B. Holditch early in May and a showing of a processed film, a complete demonstration was held later in the month. Members were warned by circular that if they were late for the meeting, admission to the dark-room would not be permitted until "the reversal stage was reached at approximately 8.30 p.m."

Blackpool A.C.C. (Hon. Sec.: George T. Purdy, 29 Jesmond Avenue, Blackpool). Twelve films are in

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production—a record. Work on a series of 9.5mm. comedy cameos, being made by the less experienced members, continues satisfactorily. Two have already been completed and others are in the final cutting stage. A S.O.T. commentary is being written for *St. Michaels* which is now being edited. Camerawork for *Poulton and Skipool* began last month. Constant screening has practically worn out *Blackpool Illuminations* (16mm. Kodachrome), but it is being patched up and re-titled. Enthusiasts on holiday in Blackpool are invited to call at the club room (back 19 Gorse Road). Weekly meetings are held on Monday at 7.30 p.m. Those who intend filming in Blackpool and would like to make use of the club's knowledge of the locality are invited to write to the secretary. New members, with enthusiasm but not necessarily equipment or experience, are welcome.

Bridlington P.S. Cine Group (Hon. Sec.: H. Freeman, Flat 4, 9 North Marine Drive, Bridlington, Yorks.). Membership now stands at 18. Members enjoyed a recent visit to the Hull & District A.C.S. when some of the hosts' own productions were shown. N. Gray of Scarborough screened his S.O.F. colour film which he made for Scarborough Corporation and explained his methods of shooting and recording. A public film show was held on June 7th in aid of the fund for the dependants of the crew of the submarine "Affray". Two members have scripted and are now shooting an 8mm. monochrome film on crabbing with the keen co-operation of local fishermen. Film shows were given every evening during the annual exhibition of the parent society.

Cape Cine Club (Asst. Hon. Sec.: Miss R. E. Home, "Malta", Harding Road, Claremont, S.A.). During a successful first quarter, which included demonstrations and film shows, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Woodrow screened their 8mm. colour films taken on their recent visit to Mexico City. A number of 35mm. colour transparencies by Dr. Homer Wellman of the Grand Canyon and the Sierra Nevada were also shown. The Quarterly Film Exhibition was held in March.

Cardiff A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: J. R. A. Griffith, 24 Woodland Road, Whitchurch, Glam.). Considerable interest was shown by lone-workers and members of the public in the cine display organised at the recent Pontypridd Hobbies Exhibition. In addition to the equipment display there was a continuous performance of amateur films in a separate hall. There are still some vacancies for new members.

Carlisle & Border C.C. (Hon. Sec.: C. W. Jackson, 115 Dalston Road, Carlisle). Many members and friends attended the talk given in a local hotel by W. B. Cockburn, secretary of the Glasgow C.C. Discussing beginners' mistakes, he illustrated his points with the aid of a film specially made up for the purpose. Other Glasgow C.C. films were shown later including *The Room*, a S.O.F. thriller.

Centaur F.U. (Hon. Sec.: H. C. Francis, 41 Stanmore Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 16). Bad weather has delayed progress on the current production which consists entirely of exteriors. Members have been busy, nevertheless, constructing the club's own theatre and projection room.

Coventry F.P.U. (Hon. Sec.: M. B. Booth, 95 Butt Lane, Allesley, Coventry). Three of the four sub-groups have now completed their films: *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (9.5mm. monochrome), *The Price of Peace* (8mm. monochrome) and *Tiifer Tat!* (8mm. Kodachrome). The script for the Godiva Pageant film has been completed. It will have a story interest, the Godiva of the pageant playing the lead. 16mm. Kodachrome is to be used and five cameras will cover the procession. A roving camera man will film crowd cut-in shots and keep a weather eye open for unrehearsed incidents.

Dolphin Cine Productions. (Hon. Sec.: E. E. Sussex, 6 Barnett Road, Brighton, 6). Progress is being steadily maintained on *Z Man*—the first production. A script has been submitted for the next film. Entitled *Last Chance* it has a youth club background.

Durban Cine Eight Club (Organising Sec.: C. R. MacKenzie, 2 Cam Brea, St. Thomas's Road, Durban, S.A.). The Half-Crown Fund (for the purchase of a club projector) now stands at £13 16s. 11d. 52 films, the output of 20 members, have been screened during the current club year. Judging date for "The Best Film of the Year" and the final of the "My Best 50 ft. Film" competitions have been fixed for August 17th.

Eccles A.C.G. (Hon. Sec.: Edward Higgins, 17 Basten Street, Higher Broughton, Manchester, 7). Now that several members have tape recorders a recording studio is to be built in the basement of the group headquarters. Work continues on the 16mm. comedies, *Wait For It* and *A Policeman's Lot*. Full scale preparations are now in hand for the presentation of the 1950 Ten Best in Manchester on June 28th and 29th. Details on page 279.

Edinburgh C.S. (Hon. Sec.: Wm. S. Dobson, 20 Barnshot Road, Edinburgh, 13). A large number of members attended the A.G.M. at which Geo. Maran was unanimously elected president. A new departure this year has been the election of a programme secretary. In his speech the retiring president, John O. Russell, said that he considered the year had been one of the most successful as regards the production of films. Competition awards gained recently included an A.C.W. Silver Plaque in the 1950 Ten Best Competition to Bill Dobson for *His Crumbling World*; a Highly Commended for Flt. Lt. H. Douglas-Reid for *Spare Time Flying*, which also gained a prize in the Scottish Association of Amateur Cinematographers competition. The secretary was awarded a prize for *Their Eventides* in the same competition while Mr. Russell gained a commendation for *Green Symphony*. Two films won awards and one was commended in the Scottish Festival. Extensive alterations to club premises are planned.

Epsom Grammar School P.S. (Hon. Sec.: P. D. Haynes, 80 Roseberry Road, Langley Vale, Surrey). The film of school life is now well under way. The filming of cross-country runs, athletic and swimming events and cricket during the present term is contemplated. Good use is being made of the school's darkroom for the processing of stills.

Finchley A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: G. D. W. Watts, 12 The Grange, Chandos Avenue, Whetstone, N.20). A group of members recently gave a 16mm. "lone-workers" film show to members of the Camera Club. Good progress is being made with the series of meetings devoted to the production of a short film. Story, treatment and rough script have been produced and work on the breakdown script is now nearly complete. Sound on tape and wire is now very popular with members who are producing a number of magnetic sound films.

Grosvenor F.P. (Hon. Sec.: R. Brinkworth, 19 Grosvenor Place, Bath). *All That Glitters*, the 1951 production, is well under way. A large crowd gathered to watch the chase and arrest sequences which were filmed in a disused factory and on a blitzed site. One onlooker even asked the "star" of the film for his autograph! The first of the monthly *News & Views*, a film of local interest, proved very popular. Camerawork on *White Goddess* has recommenced. A special trailer is to be made for screening at monthly film shows advertising the presentation of the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best in December.

Harrogate A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: D. Johnson, 32 St. John's Road, Harrogate). Recent activities included a demonstration of equipment followed by a lively debate between three members representing 16mm., 9.5mm. and 8mm. Each gave reasons for his choice. Mr. Gregory of the C.O.I. visited the club for a later meeting and talked of his experiences in film presentation. Membership continues to increase and interest in club activities is being steadily maintained. To assist in planning future productions a complete dossier is being prepared giving details of each member's particular interest in cine work.

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Hitchin C.S. (Hon. Sec.: F. R. Roach, 103 Walsworth Road, Hitchin, Herts.). Now three years old, this society is beginning work on a documentary of the local Festival of Britain activities, which will include the Hitchin Pageant. Filmed in colour and monochrome it will be preserved as a civic record. *The Story of Tilehouse Street* (16mm. documentary) nears completion. Although S.O.T. at the moment, the final accompaniment will be recorded on disc. A party of members came to London last month for the premiere of the 1950 Ten Best. Meetings are held monthly. There are vacancies for new members.

Hounslow P.S. Cine Section (Hon. Sec.: G. Hanney, 167 Ellerman Avenue, Twickenham). A battery-fed amplifier is to be built to enable the outside projection unit to give a sound accompaniment to silent films: it is needed because much of the surrounding area still has D.C. mains supply. The shortage of stock has forced the decision to hold quarterly competitions instead of monthly, as originally proposed. The closing date for the first is June 29th. Members were invited to the R.P.S. Kine Section meeting recently when George H. Sewell, F.R.P.S., gave his annual review of new apparatus.

Johannesburg P. & C.S. Cine Section (Hon. Sec.: J. K. Stokes, P.O. Box 7024, Johannesburg, S.A.). Judging of the films entered for the XVth S.A. Salon has been completed. Five 16mm. and two 8mm. entries were received. *The Magic Carpet* and *The Great Barrier Reef* (both 8mm.) were screened with *The Chief's Visit* and *Shenwedzi* (16mm. with synchronised commentaries), at the May meeting.

Kingston C.C. (Hon. Sec.: Peter Etherington, 205 Surbiton Hill-Park, Surbiton, Surrey). The last meeting—the first after the Hobbies Exhibition—recorded the largest attendance since the club was re-established shortly after the war. The programme of members' films included *Christmas Cake* by F. N. Birch, *London News Reel* and *Surrey Snapshots* by D. S. Burgess and a 1937 A.C.W. Ten Best prize winner by J. W. Mitchell. A number of new members were enrolled as a direct result of the Hobbies Exhibition but vacancies exist for a few more enthusiasts working in any of the gauges.

Leicester and Leicestershire P.S. Cine Group (Hon. Sec.: R. Hill, 43 New Way Road, Leicester). H. Littler was elected president at the A.G.M. held in April. A club trophy and cash award will be presented to the maker of the best film of any length in the members' summer competition. There will also be an award for the best cameo; length must not exceed 100 ft. of 16mm. or 50 ft. of 8mm. G. Gilbert organised a recent 9.5mm. film night, screening a mixture of members' and professional productions.

Leigh & District C.S. (Hon. Sec.: E. C. Sourbutts, 71 Henrietta Street, Leigh, Lancs.). G. H. Higginson visited the club again recently to screen a number of his monochrome productions, including a documentary about his own regiment—the Loyals. The society's documentary about Leigh is now almost complete. Membership is increasing steadily.

Lincoln C.C. Cine Section (Hon. Sec.: N. Jebson, 10 Pennell Street, Lincoln). With the return of the script for *Mind Your Step* from the A.C.W. Script Criticism Service it has been decided to make the minor alterations suggested and go ahead with the filming. G. Wilson, a member of the still section, lectured recently on tools and their uses. A show of 16mm. sound films, which included *The 1950 T.T. Races*, was followed by a screening of films from the I.A.C. library. A film appreciation group is to be formed during the next winter session. New members are welcome. It is not necessary for them to possess equipment.

Liverpool A.P.A. Cine Group (Hon. Sec.: Dr. D. Coleman, 6 Heald Street, Garston, Liverpool, 19). Locations are being selected and camera angles lined up for a documentary film about Southport. 200 ft. of Kodachrome is already in hand and shooting will begin shortly. A new feature of fortnightly gatherings

is the screening of members' own films at the end of each meeting. They are then criticised by the more experienced members. New members, with or without apparatus, are invited to attend the meetings which are held on alternate Tuesdays at the headquarters, 4 Rumford Place, Liverpool, 3.

Manchester C.S. (Hon. Programme Sec.: J. B. Wilson, 35 Radlet Drive, Timperley, Cheshire). Member J. J. Butterworth was presented with the Wyford Trophy by the vice-president of the I.A.C. at the public presentation of the 1950 I.A.C. prize-winning films at the Houldsworth Hall, Manchester. UNICA international prize-winning films were shown at a later meeting. Fortnightly meetings will continue on alternate Wednesday evenings throughout the summer months.

Mansfield & District C.S. (Hon. Gen. Sec.: Tony Blythe, 28 Robin Down Lane, Mansfield, Notts.). No fewer than 50 shows have been given for charities by this society during the past year. In addition to these, ten screenings of the official film of the visit of Queen Elizabeth were arranged for the Mansfield Corporation. The society's own 16mm. record of the event was also screened at these shows.

Molesey A.C.U. (Hon. Sec.: A. C. Seward, 6 Southmont Road, Esher, Surrey). *Camera Capers*, a 120 ft. 9.5mm. comedy has been completed. It deals with the adventures of twenty children with a cine camera. Shots which the chairman took at the Festival Gardens recently will be included in a record of the South Bank Exhibition. A party of eight members from Molesey and the Ashley F.U. visited the premiere of the 1950 Ten Best and took advantage of the opportunity of filming the Festival illuminations.

Newcastle A.C.A. (Hon. Sec.: George Cummin, 143 Bayswater Road, Newcastle on Tyne, 2). The filming of interiors for the 9.5mm. story film, *Thirty Days Hath September*, has now begun. Local interest will be provided by the inclusion of scenes of the traditional Sunday morning market on Newcastle quayside. Last year's S.O.F. film of motor-cycle events has proved so successful that another "Sam" film is to be made this summer; it will record events not covered last year, including a hill climb and a gymkhana. The Scout "Gang Show" film has been edited and is now being matched with appropriate music on wire and tape. The next monthly meeting will be held on July 10th.

Nottingham A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: R. D. Brown, 96 St. Bartholomews Road, Nottingham). A comprehensive display of equipment, including much that was home-made, a filming session on the current production and a demonstration by J. W. Briggs of his home-constructed 16mm. sound projector summarise the past month's activities. The members responsible for the actual presentation of the 1949 Ten Best and who, consequently, never really saw the films properly, paid a visit to the Ashfield C.C.'s screening of them. Monthly meetings, instead of weekly, are to be held during the forthcoming season. Club membership is to be increased and enquiries would be welcomed by the secretary.

Oldham Lyceum C.S. (Hon. Sec.: H. Hilton, 3 Chamber Hall Close, Oldham). A script is now being prepared for the next production—a comedy with a "holidays at home" theme. In conjunction with other organisations in the town, the society is taking part in a "Leisure Time Activities" Exhibition. There will be a display stand and film shows.

Pinner Film Society (Hon. Sec.: Thos. A. Tithin, 97 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner, Middx.). This society has been formed following the announcement in our May issue. Weekly Monday meetings are held at 8 p.m. The annual subscription is 10s. 6d. Details of membership from the secretary.

Planet F.S. (Hon. Sec.: Miss Hilda Collins, "Beam Ends", Belmont Avenue, Cockfosters, Herts.). Weeks of enthusiastic activity reached a successful conclusion with the premiere presentations of the A.C.W. 1950

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An audience of 70 could be accommodated at the Skegness Photographic and Cine Society's shows given in connection with the local arts and crafts exhibition. (See picture on page 228). Three projectors were used for this successful back-projection experiment, each fitted with a 750 watt lamp. The frosted side of the glass screen was towards the audience so that reflection from lighting within the hall was reduced to a minimum. Focusing was made difficult because of the thickness of the glass. The picture, although brilliant when viewed from the centre of the auditorium, fell off when viewed from the side.

Ten Best Films last month. Two club production evenings were held later in the month: a talk and demonstration on recording and editing magnetic tape and 16mm. sound tracks by John Ganderson and Hugh Baddeley. *The Marx Brothers Go West, Five Towns and Shaped By Danish Hands* were shown at the May meeting of the film appreciation section.

Potters Bar C.S. (Hon. Sec.: P. N. Johnson, 4 Oakroyd Avenue, Potters Bar, Middx.). First public showing of *Pail Ale* took place in the saloon bar of the hotel where the interiors had been filmed. Arrangements are being made for its showing in August with films by the chairman and secretary which were Highly Commended and Commended in the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best competition. This will be a part of the joint annual exhibition with the Potters Bar Photographic Society. Main feature of the display stand will show the making of *Pail Ale* from scripting to final editing.

Preston & District C.S. (Hon. Sec.: J. H. Swainson, 5 Park Road, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs.). Following a recent talk on 9.5mm., a number of films were screened on a converted 9.5mm. machine which has a sound system home-made by member Peter Wilsdon. Another member, Reg. Simpson, lectured at a later meeting on the building of an amplifier. The first reel of the 9.5mm. cine magazine has been shot. Scripts are being considered for the films to be made during the summer.

St. Andrews A.F.G. (Hon. Sec.: Brian R. Everett, 27 Meadowside Road, Cheam, Surrey). Through the co-operation of Granada Theatres, Ltd., the group's 16mm. colour film of Cheam Charter Fair was shown at the Century Cinema, Cheam, during the week May 21st-26th. G.B. Equipments loaned a 16mm. projector fitted with a high intensity arc lamp, and the full size screen was used. Sound was recorded on magnetic tape and linked up with the Western Electric equipment already in the cinema. Kodak gave the processing top priority so that editing could be carried out in time. It was the group's first venture with colour film.

Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: W. A. Cooper, 17 Eleanor Crescent, Newcastle, Staffs.). J. J. Butterworth brought along his I.A.C. prize-winning film, *In the Shadow of Cader Idris*, when members of the Manchester C.S. visited the club. A recent meeting was devoted to the reading of scenarios submitted for the next film. At a later meeting the president and his wife demonstrated the use of the dissolve as a film and time saver. The presentation of the 1949 Ten Best is reported to have been a "huge success".

Sunderland C.S. (Hon. Sec.: W. L. Curle, 94 Wayman Street, Sunderland). Several film shows for old age pensioners, hospital patients, etc., have been given during the past two months. Three meetings are scheduled for the summer: May 30th, July 11th and August 29th. Good progress is reported on the current production. The Saxon Trophy for colour and the Blacklock Trophy for monochrome were both

awarded to W. L. Curle for his 8mm. films, *Nature's Colour Box* and *Guess What?*

Triad F.U. (Hon. Sec.: Miss B. Whitehouse, 62 Priory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham). Membership now stands at 24. The second sequence for *He Who Covets* has been shot. Plans are being made for the filming of exteriors.

Vanguard F.U. (Hon. Sec.: John Price, 93 Geldeston Road, London, E.5). *As Though It Were Yesterday* is the title of the current production for which several interiors have already been filmed. A musical accompaniment has been specially written by a member and will be recorded on a separate sound track and used for dubbing. There are some vacancies for experienced members.

Victorian A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: B. A. Bennett, Box 1270L, G.P.O., Melbourne, Australia). A special screening of *African Mission* (16mm. Kodachrome) by member W. A. Deutscher was followed by a demonstration of practical titling. The Pan American Airways 16mm. colour sound films, *Wings Over Hawaii, Wings to Cuba* and *The Double-decked Clipper* were shown at the first open night in 1951.

Wanstead & Woodford C.C. (Hon. Sec.: W. E. Dodd, 43 Burnham Road, Chingford, E.4). "Jack" Barton of Planet recently gave a most entertaining talk, explaining his methods and describing his experiences and difficulties. He placed great emphasis on the need for accurate focusing in "table-top" filming. He screened his film *Go West, Young Man* which won for him a Silver Plaque in the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best Competition. At a later meeting the five winning films in the club competition were shown to a large audience of members and friends.

West London F.U. (Hon. Sec.: A. F. Shave, 77a Adelaide Grove, Shepherds Bush, W.12). Filming for *Little Men* is now almost complete. Camerawork has begun for the 9.5mm. group's production, *Backwash*, while the 8mm. enthusiasts are still hard at work making models for their film with an inter-planetary theme. New members are welcome.

Windsor F.U. (Hon. Sec.: J. Robinson, 19 Alexandra Road, Windsor, Berks). First report from this unit indicates that it has done much useful work with the minimum of publicity. *A Star is Born* (16mm. "musical" with synchronised S.O.T. accompaniment) consisting entirely of interiors was completed last year. The dance sequences were arranged by a professional dancing teacher. *Father Thames* (400 ft. Kodachrome unscripted documentary) was filmed by a member over a period of two years. The unit film *Windsor* has been in production for eighteen months and is now complete but for a few shots and a recorded commentary. A professional film actor and several repertory players are numbered among the members. A script is being prepared for a film with a "psychological" theme; shooting is due to begin in the autumn.

Wombwell & District F.S. (Hon. Sec.: M. Sykes, 35 Roebuck Street, Wombwell, Yorks.). Formed a year ago this society now has a membership of 30. The first film (16mm.) was a record of a social evening held in April to wind up the winter session. The production of the next film is now being considered.

Wulfrun A.C.C. (Hon. Sec.: G. Hayward, 32 Rupert Street, Wolverhampton). "A difficult task" commented W. Marsh on the judging of this year's entries for the annual Hartley Plaque competition for the best individual member's film. How difficult is shown by the final placings: A. N. Pickles and W. Forster shared the plaque with the films *Music Hath Charms* (8mm. colour fantasy) and *Yesterday's England* (16mm. B. & W. travelogue) respectively. Miss P. Homer, the producer of *Better Late* (8mm. comedy) tied for second place with G. Hayward who made *West Park*—a 9.5mm. pictorial film set to music. *Down to Earth*, 8mm. colour farming record by A. N. Pickles and *Enchanted Duchy*, 16mm. colour holiday film by R. Rowley shared third prize. The 1950 I.A.C. prize-winning films were shown recently and preparations are well in hand for the screening of the A.C.W. 1950 Ten Best in September. The film record of the Mayor's year of office—he is also club president—has now been completed. Shots of the opening of the Festival of Britain are included—they were taken by the Mayor himself who attended in his official capacity. A film group has been formed to make a second safety-first film for the local accident prevention committee.

NEW CLUBS

Harrow, Kenton, Wealdstone enthusiasts are invited to communicate with G. Hugo of 17 Cambridge Road, North Harrow, Middlesex, with a view to the formation of a cine society.

Cork. Mr. T. Ryan, Casa Mia, Beaumont Park, Cork, and Mr. Canning, 25 St. Anns, Turners Cross, Cork, would be pleased to hear from local "nine-fivers" who would be prepared to support a 9.5mm. cine-society.

Films for the Home Show

A selection of new and recent additions to the film libraries. Abbreviations used: M. minute; D. Director; number in brackets thus: (2), indicates number of reels; P. indicates that film is for sale outright.

16mm. SOUND FEATURES

FILM TRADERS LTD.

Paissa. 116m. D. Roberto Rossellini. Gar Moore, Maria Michi, Renzo Avanzo. (75% English dialogue. English sub-titles for Italian dialogue). Consisting of six separate stories, linked by the theme of the advance of the Allied troops through Italy, this film is outstanding for its stark realism. Tension is sustained throughout.

Angellina. 90m. D. Luigi Zampa. Anna Magnani, Nando Bruno. Magnificent performance from Anna Magnani in this comedy about a housewife who, denied her rations, decides to take the law into her own hands.

Sylvia and the Ghost. 91m. D. Claude Autant-Lara. Odette Joyeux, Francois Perier, Jacques Tati. Charming romantic comedy. Sylvia, the daughter of an impoverished baron, lives in a dream world with the ghost of a kindly young man.

The Miracle. 45m. D. Roberto Rossellini. Anna Magnani, Federico Fellini. This is one section of a film Rossellini dedicated to the art of Anna Magnani. The story concerns a simple minded peasant who is seduced by a shepherd she imagines to be St. Joseph. Magnani achieves a startlingly impressive characterisation despite a rather fragmentary background and uncertain dramatic exposition.

Un Ami Viendra Ce Soir. 115m. Michel Simon, Louis Salou. A mental hospital on the Swiss border is used as the secret headquarters of the resistance movement.

(Continued on page 288)

M-G-M NEWS

FOR 16-MILLIMETRE FILM USERS

Further recent additions to the
foremost list of productions
available for hire . . .

Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Vera-Ellen in "ON THE TOWN" (Colour)

Clark Gable, Loretta Young in "KEY TO THE CITY"

June Allyson, Dick Powell, Ricardo Montalban in "RIGHT CROSS"

Robert Taylor, John Hodiak in "AMBUSH"

Robert Walker, Joan Leslie in "THE SKIPPER SURPRISED HIS WIFE"

Gene Kelly in "BLACK HAND"

William Elliot, Vera Ralston, John Carroll in "WYOMING" (Republic)

Gene Autry in "TRAIL TO SAN ANTONIO" (Republic)

★ ★ ★

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

16mm. Division, 1 BELGRAVE PLACE, LONDON, S.W.1. (Sloane 0746)

G.B. Film Library

Diamond City. 89m. D. David MacDonald. David Farrar, Honor Blackman, Diana Dors. British equivalent of the Western. One man attempts to enforce law and order in a newly-discovered South African diamond field.

A Run for your Money. 84m. D. Charles Frend. Donald Houston, Moira Lister, Alec Guinness. The adventures of two Welsh miners who win a newspaper competition and come to London to collect the prize-money. Competent acting with a refreshing performance from Moira Lister. Entertaining comedy and attractive photography.

Fools Rush In. 79m. D. John Paddy Carstairs. Sally Ann Howes, Guy Rolfe, Nora Swinburne. Adapted from the screen play by Geoffrey Kerr, this is the story of Pamela, who reads the marriage service for the first time on the morning of her wedding and decides to call off the ceremony.

Ron Harris

Three Came Home. 106m. D. Jean Negulesco. Claudette Colbert, Patric Knowles. The story, based on fact, of a woman who, with her small son, spent most of the war years in a Japanese prison camp. Convincing story of fortitude and endurance.

When Willie Comes Marching Home. 82m. D. John Ford. Dan Dailey, Corinne Calvet, Colleen Townsend. Very bright comedy on the theme of small town hero-worship.

Mother Didn't Tell Me. 88m. D. Claude Binyon. Dorothy Macquire, William Lundigan, June Havoc. Domestic comedy about a working girl who marries a young doctor. Difficulties arise which almost lead to a divorce but an accident brings things to a happy conclusion.

The Major and the Minor. 102m. D. Billy Wilder. Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland, Rita Johnson. In order to travel at half-fare Sue Applegate dresses up as a twelve-year-old. Complications arise when she becomes involved with the Major.

The Well-Groomed Bride. 76m. Olivia de Havilland, Ray Milland, Sonny Tufts. Fast-moving comedy about the mad scramble for the only bottle of champagne in town.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

Black Hand. 92m. D. Richard Thorpe. Gene Kelly, J. Carrol Naish, Teresa Celli. Set in the Italian quarter of New York at the turn of the century, this is the tale of a young Italian who swears to avenge his murdered father. Expressive photography. Complete programme with *Water Sports*, 8m.; *The Hungry Wolf*, 9m.; and *Annie Was A Wonder*, 11m.

Key to the City. 98m. D. George Sidney. Clark Gable, Loretta Young, Frank Morgan, Marilyn Maxwell, James Gleason, Lewis Stone. The adventures of two mayors who meet at a conference and despite constant complications fall in love.



Pamela refuses to part with her honeymoon suitcase in this scene from "Fools Rush In" (G.B. Film Library).

Tailor-made part for Gable as the two-fisted mayor who defeats his crooked political opponents. With *City of Children*, 10m.; and *Pest Control*, 8m.

On the Town. 98m. D. Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen. Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Betty Garrett, Ann Miller. Remarkably good musical comedy which will stand seeing more than once. Gay music, witty lyrics, brilliant dancing sequences. With *Shots And Shots*, 9m.; *We Can Dream, Can't We?* 8m.

Wigmore Films

And Baby Makes Three. 84m. D. Henry Levin. Robert Young, Barbara Hale. Comedy about a divorcee who re-marries her first husband, after getting as far as the altar with intending second.

House of Settlement. 93m. D. Henry Levin and Gordon Douglas. Glenn Ford, Evelyn Keyes. Ex-war hero gangster on the run from a rival gang after some involved double-crossing takes refuge in a settlement house at Christmas time.

16mm. SOUND SHORTS

Associated-British-Pathe

Tin Pan Alley. The story of the birth and presentation of a popular song. Singers include Sam Browne, Vera Lynn, Benny Lee, "Perry", Vicky Autier, Pat Kirkwood, Doreen Stevens, Carol Lynne, The Beverley Sisters, Anne Shelton, Petula Clark and the Five Smith Brothers. Band leaders include Gerald, Mantovani, Henry Hall, Billy Cotton, Joe Loss and Felix Mendelssohn.

1951 Grand National, The Cup Final, 1951. (Also available in 16mm. silent, and 8mm.)

Cattermoul Film Service

A Divided World (1) D. Arne Sucksdorff. This famous film, which reaches a high lyrical intensity, should definitely be seen. Its theme: nature on the prowl at night in the forest. Its production is a remarkable tour de force, and there will be many arguments as to how some of the effects were managed.

The Dream Valley (1) D. Arne Sucksdorff. Mountains and waterfalls around a Norwegian fiord, as seen by a small girl. Evocative photography, but the production is less closely knit than in the best of Sucksdorff's work.

Contemporary Films, Ltd.

Indonesia Calling. 20m. D. Joris Ivens. Interesting example of political propaganda, ably photographed and edited. The majority may find the doctrine it advocates repugnant, but the keen student of cinema is likely to find its construction (the marshalling of carefully selected facts to present a special case) repays study. Note closing sequence in which skilful camerawork and cutting transform a handful of dock workers into the semblance of a crowd on the march.

Ron Harris

Shooting the Salmon Rapids; Bowlers Fair; Spotlight on the News (2); *Song of Sunshine* (colour).



Olivia de Havilland, Ray Milland and Sonny Tufts star in this Ron Harris release "The Well Groomed Bride."

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9.5 Specto	£36 0 0
9.5/16 Specto 'Educational', 250w.	£56 0 0
8mm. Dekko 118A, 500 watt	£45 0 0
8mm. Kodak 8/46, 200 watt	£33 0 0
8mm. Meopta 'Atom', 200 watt	£22 10 0
8mm. G.B.-Bell Howell 'Screen-master' 400 watt light	£57 0 0
16mm. G.B.-Bell Howell '613', 750 watt light	£85 10 0

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Zeiss Movikon 16mm. Magazine, f/2.7 Tessar, case	£75 0 0
Dekko 9.5mm., f/1.9 Ross lens in focusing mount	£26 0 0

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By the way, we have two special camera snips to offer this month. No. 1 is a Bolex Model H.16 16mm. camera. Turret head fitted with 1" Dallmeyer f/1.5 lens, 15mm. (wide angle) and 3" Telephoto. Camera fitted with frame counter and complete with de-luxe hide carrying case. Price £175 0 0. No. 2: R.C.A. 16mm. Sound-on-Film Newsreel Camera. Records commentary on film during shooting. 100ft. film capacity. Turret head fitted with Wollensak 3.5 lens. Complete with leather carrying case. Price £135 0 0. Complete 16mm. sound library catalogue 1/- post free or illustrated list of Moviepaks free for postage. The largest accumulation of films below 35mm. in size in the country is here—on our premises:—

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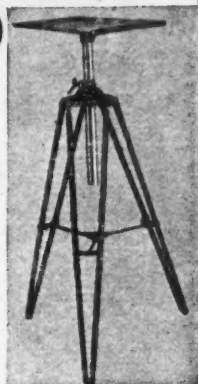
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8mm. Dekko Projector, 500 watt, Model 118a, absolutely mint, in original packing, £34 10s. 16mm. Model, 750 watt, similar condition, £44. S. E. Corby, 114a Hamlet Court Road, Westcliff.

Victor Greyline. Brand new, complete with spare lamps, set of spare valves and P.E.C. Nearest £140. (Lancashire). Box 758.

GeBescop Model A 16mm. talking machine, metal stand, built-in pick-up and record player, oft. Celfix beaded screen, including spare valves and rewind, perfect condition, recently overhauled by G.B.C. 100 gns. Adelman, The Cedars, Mill Ridge, Edgware 0138.

16mm. Ampro Premier 20 sound projector. Excellent condition and in perfect running order. Bargain at £150. Wakeley, Lisswood, Liss, Hants.

16mm. Specto Educational 250 watt, 800 ft. arms, cost £50. Immaculate, hardly used, £35. Box 773.

16mm. Kodascope "D", 300 watts, pilot light, resistance, complete £19/15/- Fort, 6 South Side, Clapham Common. Macaulay 5001.

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G.B. Scope Model A 16mm. Sound projector, Taylor-Hobson 2" lens, 1,600 ft. spool arms, also splicer and 400 ft. sound film, near offer £30. Phone Bournemouth 7049. Blunt, Burnham, Gervis Road.

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